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LOS ANGELES

IVAN VEJEEGHEN ;

OR,

LIFE IN RUSSIA.

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IVAN VEJEEGHEN ;

OR,

LIFE IN RUSSIA.

BY THADDEUS BULGÁRIN.

TWO VOLS.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

PROBABLY no other work which was ever published in Russia, acquired such a sudden popularity as the Novel a translation of which is now submitted to the British public. The first edition, which came out in the beginning of 1829, was sold off within three weeks after it issued from the press; it has been translated into the French and German languages; and, in its own country, its fame has extended itself to the lowest ranks of society.

Notwithstanding the abundance of intellectual riches with which the land we live in overflows, perhaps this small contribution to the stock of literature may not be altogether overlooked or despised, especially by those who have any curiosity,—to contemplate the social condition of a people which exhibits some features common to the whole of Europe a few centuries ago; while, in some other points, it resembles the splendidly industrious subjects of the ancient Pharaohs;—to con-

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trast the state of mind in the most backward, with that in the most forward of European nations in the march of intellect ;—and, above all, to read a very interesting chapter in the great book of Human Nature.

Concerning the manner in which this translation is executed, a few observations are necessary, rather in extenuation than commendation.

To render literally all the peculiarities of a foreign idiom, is apt to produce a work not likely to be relished by the great majority of readers, and thus to hurt the main object for which a book of this sort, like the razors in the fable, is made ; that is—*to sell*. On the other hand, by giving to a foreign production all the characteristics of the vernacular idiom, an effect is produced which may be compared to that which results from a figure meant to represent an Eastern saint or ancient hero, dressed up in the modern costume of the West. Ignorant people may be pleased—but the taste of those who know better is shocked.

However, for more than one reason, it seems to be advisable to make a compromise between these two extremes, and to follow in this respect the prevailing fashion of meeting the ideas of the multitude half-way : but the original has been adhered to wherever the mean-

ing appeared capable of being rendered closely and neatly at the same time.

It has been found necessary to encumber the text with a considerable number of explanatory notes, which, if they possess no other good quality, may, at any rate, lay claim to the negative merit of shortness.

The translator must acknowledge his want of experience in book-making, and is sensible that many other defects besides, exist in the performance : the critical reader will find these out by far more readily than the unpractised writer ; but it will be very agreeable if, after all, he shall be adjudged not to have deserved ill of that *best of republics*—the Republic of Letters.

ABERDEEN,
1st June, 1831.

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IVAN VEJEEGHEN.

CHAPTER I.

The Orphan—a picture of Human Nature, after the manner of the Flemish school.

THE first ten years of my life were spent in the house of Mr. Gologordoffsky, a country gentleman in Byalo-Russia* : there I was reared like a home-bred wolfling, and was known under the name of *the Orphan*. Nobody cared for me, and still less cared I for any body. None of the inmates of the house paid me any attention except an old, worn out dog, who, like me, was left to provide for himself.

I had no corner of the house assigned me for my lodging, no food nor clothing allotted me, nor any fixed occupation. In the summer, I spent my days in the open air, and slept under the sheds attached to the barn or cow-house.† In the winter, I lived in the bulky kitchen, which served as a rendezvous for the

* A district composed of some of the border-provinces, lying between the Empire of Russia and the old Kingdom of Poland.

† The farm-yards in Russia, and part of Poland, are supplied with roofs or sheds, on account of the sun's heat in summer, and the snow in winter.

numerous train of servants, and I slept on the hearth* among the hot cinders. In summer I wore nothing but a long shirt and a piece of rope about my waist : in winter I covered my nakedness with whatever came in my way—any old jacket or fragment of a peasant's coat served my purpose. With these articles I was furnished by compassionate people, who did not know what to do with their old rags. I wore nothing on my feet, which became so hardened that neither grass nor mud, nor ice, made any difference of feeling. My head likewise was left to its natural covering : the rain washed out the dust, and the snow cleared away the ashes. I was fed with the fragments from the servants' table, and feasted upon eggs, which I gathered in the neighbourhood of the hen-house, and about the barn ; on the leavings in the milk-pots,† which I licked with uncommon relish, and on fruit which I stole by night in the orchard. I was under the command of no one in particular, but every body ordered me about at discretion. In summer, they set me to herd the geese on the pasture, or on the banks of the pond, to protect the goslings and chickens from dogs and kites. In winter they employed me as a turnspit in the kitchen, and this was to me a most agreeable occupation. Every time that the cook turned his or her back, I would quickly apply my palm to the juicy roast, and under my wrist suck my greasy hand as a bear does its paw. I sometimes very ingeniously

* In Byalo-Russia stoves are not so much used, as raised hearths, on which fires are kindled.

† The milk is kept in large, round, black-earthen pots.

snatched pieces of bacon from the dripper, and stole cutlets out of the stewing-pan : my chief occupation was to run errands for all the men-servants, maid-servants, and even the foot-boys. They sent me to the *kartchma** for *vodky*,† placed me on the out-look in sundry places, without explaining their reasons ; with orders to whistle or clap my hands on the appearance of the squire, steward, and sometimes even of the other men-servants, or maid-servants. On the first word—" Orphan, run this way or that way, and call this one or that one"—I set off at the gallop, and fulfilled my instructions to a tittle, knowing that the smallest neglect would expose me to an inevitable beating. When they placed me on the watch, and forbade me to look about me, (which mostly happened in the garden, during the summer season,) I stood like one buried in the ground, not daring even to lift up my eyes or make the least motion, till they pushed me from the spot. Sometimes, though very seldom, they rewarded me for my zealous services with a piece of black bread, old bacon, or cheese, and I, not being famished, would divide it with my beloved dog Koodlashka.

Observing how other children were fondled and kissed, I wept bitterly, from an inexpressible feeling of envy and chagrin : the caresses and blandishments of Koodlashka alleviated my grief, and made my solitude more tolerable. If other children caressed

* A Polish hostelry is called a *kartchma*.

† *Vodky* is an ill-tasted sort of whisky, made from malt and rye flour.

their mothers and nurses, I would do the same to my Koodlashka, calling him *mammy* and *nursy*, lifting him, kissing him, pressing him to my breast, and tumbling with him on the sand. I had an inclination to love my fellow-creatures, particularly those of the other sex, but this inclination was thwarted by fear. All beat me and knocked me about, either from chagrin, for diversion, or from ennui. When I happened to meet any of the lackeys or maid-servants, after they had got a scolding or beating from the higher powers, they would wreak their vengeance upon me, driving me out of their way either with a blow or a curse. If I chanced to be tempted by curiosity to look on while they harnessed the carriage-horses, the coachmen, to raise a laugh among the other by-standers, would strike me on the head with the whip, and, lashing my feet, make me leap from the smart.

I did not dare to approach the sportsmen within reach of the whipper-in. The herdsmen would also amuse themselves at my expense, by driving me into the midst of their flock, and observing the effects of my fear in trying to extricate myself from among the cows and sheep. The two sons of the squire would also take their sport in shooting at me from a bow, or pursuing me with little lap-dogs, from which, however, my Koodlashka always defended me.

The *Ghospodeen* himself I rarely saw : meeting me once in the court-yard, he forbade me to come near the windows of the mansion, and stamped so terribly with his foot, saying, " Get out of the way, you little savage," that I no more dared to appear in the pre-

sence of so august a personage, but would hide myself in the dog-kennel if I only chanced to see him at a distance. His lady and her two daughters I had no opportunity of seeing, except through the garden-fence or in their carriage, and knew them only by their dress. I stood in the utmost fear of the steward and his wife, because they occasionally flogged me, for an example to their dear little son, who was not disposed to learn his lessons, but preferred robbing birds' nests and throwing stones at the Ghospodeen's ducklings and chickens. The destruction of the domestic birds by this little good-for-nothing, was laid to the blame of the kites and of my carelessness. As a punishment for his frolics they would place him to witness how I was whipped, and to hear a lecture which used to be concluded in these words: "Observe, Ignatius; if you continue to romp and not to learn, you will be flogged too, as severely as this orphan. Do you hear how he screams? You will have to sing the same song by and by!" In recompense for the dramatic performance of this didactic experiment, the steward's wife would give me a bit of bread and cheese, or a pot of milk, which I swallowed with tears, without understanding the cause either of the punishment or gratuity.

This is all that I recollect of the first years of my childhood, which is impressed on my memory as an era of unalloyed sorrow and suffering. At last it pleased providence to lighten my hard lot, and at least to include me in the number of rational creatures.

One of the female servants, *Masha*,* a cheerful and kind-looking girl, who used to place me on the watch in the garden oftener than the other chambermaids ; this young woman meeting me one day in the court-yard at twilight in an autumn evening, beckoned me to her, and patting my head, said : “ Take this paper, orphan : keep a fast hold of it and go to the village. There, in the starost’s† house, ask where the officer lives, give him the paper and return home. Only don’t tell any body that I sent you, and if any one should want to take the paper from you, don’t give it up though you should eat it. Dost thou understand me, orphan ?” “ I understand you.” “ Now, repeat all that I have told you.” I repeated it word for word, which gave her such satisfaction, that she almost kissed me and would have actually done it, if I had not been so dirty. “ But dost thou know the starost’s house.” “ Why should not I know it : isn’t it the third house from the Kartchma ?” “ Very well : but dost thou know what officer it is ?” “ To be sure, the gentleman who has red facings to his coat, who rides by on horseback, and who comes in the evenings.” “ That’s enough : I see you are a sharp, active boy, and if you acquit yourself well, you shall have plenty of bread, meat and everything : dost thou hear ?” “ I hear you :” replied I, and immediately whistling on Koodlashka, I ran out at the gate with great speed.

* The vulgar name of Mary.

† The starost is the elder or chief of a village, elected either by the villagers themselves, or appointed by their proprietor.

It was three versts* to the village by the highway, but, by a short cut known to me through the fields and hedges, it was not the half of that. Having got to the starost's house, I met the officer in the porch, whom I knew by his features, made my bow to him, and delivered the note. He looked at me from head to foot, smiled and ordered me to follow him into the *eezba*.† There, having read over the paper, he appeared very well satisfied with its contents, and as a reward, apparently for good news, gave me a bit of fruit-pie. This was the first time in my life that I partook of that dainty. I could not contain my ecstasy at feeling in my mouth a hitherto unknown agreeable sensation : in the officer's presence I began to devour the pie, at the same time laughing and capering for joy.

At this moment another officer came in, and they were both highly taken with my wild simplicity in tasting sugar, wine, and different sweetmeats. "Who art thou?" asked the officer to whom I was sent. "The orphan:" answered I.—"Who were thy parents?"—"I do not know." "What is thy name?" "The orphan." "Poor creature," said the good officer, patting my cheeks : "I will do something for

* A verst is two thirds of an English mile.

† An *eezba* is that part of a peasant's house which is inhabited by himself and family ; the whole premises consist generally of a court-yard with a covered roof, of an inclosure for the cattle, another for the hay, an ice-cellar for the milk and meat in summer, a storehouse for oats, rye and buck wheat, and a covered porch with a door, to intercept the exit of heat from the *eczba* in winter ; lastly the *eczba* itself which is heated with a large brick oven-stove.

thee." "Isn't he a pretty boy?" added the officer, turning to his companion. "He really is," answered the other: "only it is a pity that he is kept like a pig." The caresses of these good officers raised my spirits to such a degree, that I, recollecting how I had seen other children caressed daily by their fathers and mothers, fell a crying and threw myself down to kiss the feet* of the persons who, for the first time in my life, treated me with humanity. My tears and gratitude made a powerful impression upon them. They redoubled their kind treatment, and gave me different sweetmeats to take with me. "Go home, now, orphan," said the officer to me; "and say to the person who sent you," "very well;" "but so that nobody else may hear thee." "Dost thou understand me?" "I understand. I will take a hold of Masha's skirt, and pull her aside, and tell her that the good gentleman said, "very well." "Excellent: could not be better. This boy is very quick for his years," rejoined the officer, "and I will make a man of him: good bye, orphan."

In general all secret commissions lie near to the heart of the employers, and become a source of good fortune to the employed when they are promptly executed. This was the case with me. On arriving at the manor-house, I slipped into the kitchen, and observing that Masha looked rather uneasily, first at me, then all around her, I did not appear as if I wished to speak with her, but slunk out of the kitchen. Masha

* This is an usual mode of asking a favour of a superior, among the common people.

followed me, and when I gave her an account of my embassy, she also patted me and praised me for my activity, ordered me to tell no one of what had happened, and promised next day to reward me. I spent the most agreeable night in my life under the roof of the farm-yard, on the straw with my Koodlashka, who kept me warm while I dreamed the whole night of officers with pies and sugar.

Next morning, while I was prowling, as usual, about the kitchen, to pick up what might come in my way, I saw Masha who beckoned me to her, and ordered me to follow her to the steward. Supposing that I would have to encounter another whipping for the benefit of the little scape-grace, I fell a crying and was preparing to run away to the officers in the village. But Masha having assured me that no harm was intended, I followed her, trembling however from fear. They washed me, and combed me, or properly speaking, scraped me, put clean linen upon me, and some sort of a coat, and then led me into the apartments occupied by the squire and family. I was exactly in the predicament of a sheep in the hands of its shepherd, which trembles for fear, not knowing whether they are going to shear it or slaughter it. I was stationed in the lobby and ordered to wait. It astonished me greatly that the lackeys and foot-boys who were passing and repassing through the lobby, did not beat me nor laugh at me as usual.* This gave me some cou-

* In the houses of the Russian country gentry, a stranger or visitor will find the behaviour of the servants to be a pretty accurate thermometer of the dispositions of their master or mistress,

rage ; but when the door leading from the inner-rooms suddenly opened, and I beheld the Ghospodeen in all his glory, with his lady, the young misses and their brothers, who all came straight up to me, my presence of mind utterly failed me, and the recollection of the squire's orders not to approach the house-windows, came fresh upon my memory. An icy coldness thrilled through my veins. I trembled, shrieked with terror, and wished to make a hasty retreat from the lobby ; but they stopped me. By good luck, I observed the officer in the number of the spectators ; I threw myself at his feet and exclaimed in a pitiful tone : “ Pray, good Sir, don't let them flog me : I am really not to blame ! ” “ Poor orphan,” said the officer ; “ how he is harassed and frightened ; rise, my little friend : ” added he ; “ they will not whip you, but feed you with pies.”

The word *pies* had a magic effect upon me. I rose, wiped off the tears with my sleeves, and looking about me, observed that the squire grinned and smoothed his mustachios, the misses held their handkerchiefs to their eyes, and their mother turned aside from me, while the little masters from behind their mamma, protruded their tongues and made grimaces.

“ Mr. Kantelukoffsky,” said the Ghospodeen, addressing himself to the steward, “ I take that boy to serve in the house, and, at the request of my eldest daughter, he is to wait upon her in the capacity of

the one being as variable as the other. This rule, however, is only applicable to people whom the master and mistress consider to be their inferiors, or who are in any way dependent upon them.

English jockey. Send to the town for the Jew-tailor, and order him to make a suit for him after the picture which my daughter will give you."

"I hear you," said the steward, with a profound obeisance. "I am taken with the boy," gravely continued Mr. Gologordoffsky; "it is astonishing that I did not remark him before in the house." The females began to caress me and pat me. "What is his name?" asked the squire of the steward; but neither he nor myself could answer that question. They sent to enquire at all the servants, and the result of the investigation was, that amongst them they furnished me with the name of Ivan. From that time they ceased to call me "the orphan," and I was known in the house under the name of Vanky Englishman, from my jockey dress. I am not the first nor the last in the world who has been indebted for his name and dignity to his dress.

CHAPTER II.

Mr. Gologordoffsky and his Family.

WHEN Byalo-Russia formed a part of Poland, Mr. Gologordoffsky shewed a great attachment to Russia, and farther proved that he sprang from an old Russian family, which had settled in this country in the time of Mstislaf, the brave. On the incorporation of this district with Russia, Mr. Gologordoffsky, of a sudden became a devotee of the old Polish government, and began to trace his origin to a chamberlain of the ancient Polish King Popel, who, upon the authority of written documents, is said to have been devoured by mice on the island of Hopel. Mr. Gologordoffsky very much regretted those blessed times when a powerful nobleman could crush the poor gentry with impunity, and while he called them his brothers and equals, might flog them with rods, while they lay stretched out upon a carpet as a mark of distinction between them and the peasants ; and when he might lock them up in the house-prison, or take possession of their estate if he had a mind. He particularly regretted the change of customs at the diets or elections of magistrates. In good old times the rich proprietor brought along with him some cart-loads of poor-gentry, accoutred with arms and ready to fight, and set them to elect himself and his friends to the different offices, and to

knock down and cut down the rival candidates. These days were called the golden age of freedom. Mr. Gologordoffsky thus having his privileges abridged from without, could only rule within his own domains on the old footing. Besides his numerous household servants, who were his own vassals, he had in his service a number of poor gentry who thought to make up for their low calling by high-sounding titles. The household of Mr. Gologordoffsky was exactly such as, in days of yore, were those of the ancient feudal Barons and of the old Polish *Pans*. The principal servants were, in the first place, the confidential agent for the management of law-suits, of which there were always pending in the different courts two or three dozen ; the commissary, or head-steward, over the whole property ; the *econome* or under steward ; the *marshalek* who presided over the table-service and the domestics ; the stud-master who governed the stables and grooms ; the head cook or commander in chief of the pots and pans, cooks and kitchen-maids ; the *okhmeestreena* or housekeeper who commanded the maid servants, and superintended the linen and the pantry, which in Polish is called *aptetchka*, and contains sweets of all sorts, preserves, confections, sugar, coffee, and a numerous array of spirits and cordials. Besides these servants of honourable station, there lived in the house in all readiness, the *kapel-meister* or music-master, who taught the young ladies and gentlemen music, and presided at the orchestra, consisting of twelve people, who in winter (besides) filled the office of footmen, but in summer raked hay, and worked in the garden,

The *kapelyan* or chaplain, a monk of the order of Jesuits, had under his inspection three tutors, and watched over the education of Mr. Gologordoffsky's children : in addition to this there was a French *gouverneur*, and *madame*, a French woman, with the young ladies. The gardener, a German, was at the same time member of the board of agriculture. The squire had for his own person a free valet de chambre, a *shlyakhtitch** who was a favourite and his confident in secret affairs : his lady had likewise a maid of equal rank for the same purpose, who, though she discharged all the duty of chambermaid, yet, in virtue of her birth and merit, exacted respect in the house, and was addressed *Panna* or Ma'am. The young ladies had likewise each a *panna* from among the *shlyakhtyankas*, who had charge of their wardrobe and the female servants of their suite, of whom, with each of the young ladies, one bore the appellation of *Garderobnoy*. The chase formed a department of itself, and was partly under the inspection of the stable-keeper, and partly of the squire himself, who was a great sportsman. Amongst the sportsmen were several *shlyakhtitches* who went under the name of *strelitz*. Most of the upper servants, such as the law-agent or *plenipotent*, *commissary*, *marshalek*, *stud-master*, *econome*, *kapelmeister* and *gouverneur*, lived in the house with their wives and children ; besides their salary they received rations of provisions for their own table or ordinary, were attended by the servants of the house, and kept

* *Shlyakhtitch* is the name given to the small Polish gentry ; synonymous with the old English term of franklin or yeoman.

their own horses at the squire's expense. All the other free servants also received rations ; the house vassals were partly fed from the squire's table, and besides that had a table of their own. But as the free servants spent a great part of their allowance in drink, and the vassals never had enough to eat, every one laid hold of whatever he could, by hook or by crook. Besides these feudal attendants, there lived in the house for the sake of company and amusement to the squire and his lady, some gentlemen and ladies, toad-eaters, friends and distant relations, under the name of residents. They received no salary, but had the advantage of the table, kept their own servants, and some of them had the privilege of keeping horses. Amongst the number of these residents were some bachelor creditors of Mr. Gologordoffsky, some widows of old servants whose wages had remained unpaid after some twenty years' service, and some orphans possessed of capital under the guardianship of the landlord. In a word, Mr. Gologordoffsky's house contained nearly as many mouths and stomachs as there were working hands on the whole property, and from this cause the working hands were sadly tormented, and made but feeble exertions to fill the stomachs of so overwhelming a majority of sinecurists. It is true that Mr. Gologordoffsky himself, his family, and guests invited to partake of his hospitality, ate and drank well ; but his huge table had at one extremity what is called " a grey end," where no dainty-dishes or savoury wines ever reached, and where in full measure was felt the inconvenience of a disproportion between *outlay* and *income*.

Mr. Gologordoffsky, as a mark of his Polish extraction, wore long mustachios, which he frequently stroked, particularly when he talked on important subjects, such as the county-elections and law-suits, and disputes with his neighbours, whom he reckoned to be all inferior to himself, notwithstanding that many of them were richer and more serviceable to their country. Mr. Gologordoffsky's pride was founded on the antiquity of his family, which he proved not by historical documents regarding notable transactions, but from the journals of the courts of law, in which for the course of four centuries were recorded complaints against robberies committed by his ancestors, and the decisions which ensued. Families of one or two centuries he called upstarts, and declared them unworthy to be connected with him, or received on a friendly footing. He had a particular prejudice and dislike towards those who had made their own fortunes in an honest way, and had not inherited them from their ancestors. He admitted to his house all without exception, but feasted sumptuously only such persons as were necessary to him, such as people in office, capitalists and money-lenders ; and was particularly kind to such gentlemen as from interested motives shewed him extraordinary marks of respect, and listened quietly to his stories and abuse of his enemies. In the mornings, when the weather was unfit for hunting, Mr. Gologordoffsky occupied himself with his law-papers : his agent composed them, and he merely for his amusement added to the papers chicaneries, personalities, and imaginary pretensions. After that, he

went round all the court-yard to solace himself with the salutations of his numerous servants. After entertaining himself during dinner with jokes, (not always the most delicate,) at the expense of those who sat beside him, he lay down and took a nap to evaporate the fumes of the wine.

Till evening his time was devoted to particular amusements, selected by the ladies, in which, however, Mr. Gologordoffsky partook only as a spectator. In the evening, Josel, the Jew, made his appearance, who rented all the mills and kartchmas on the property. This Josel was general agent for the whole house, privy counsellor both of master and servants, walking newspaper, and relater of all political news, and scandalous anecdotes within a circle of a hundred miles round, and teller of every thing good and bad. The Jew was master of two powerful talismans for the subduing of hearts, viz. money and *vodky*. He was necessary to all, from the master down to the lowest cowherd in the village; all were in his debt, and all had more inclination to borrow than to pay. With this Jew Mr. Gologordoffsky spent the greater part of his evenings, while he sipped his bowl of punch, gathering from him all the news from the capital, and government-town,* where the Jew had his correspondents. Along with the Jew, he devised projects for

* The reader is probably aware, that Russia is divided into provinces called *Gubernias*, or governments, and that in the chief town of each province, there is a governor, police-master, procureur, and courts of law. These *governments* again are subdivided into districts, or *ooyezds*, which have each their *subordinate* magistrates and courts of law in the *district-town*.

the sale of corn, spirits, and wood, for the borrowing of money, and for the avoiding payment of old debts. He counselled with the Jew concerning the commencement of new law-suits, the continuance of such as were already begun, and the endless spinning out of those of long continuance. The Jew proposed different measures to increase the income without any previous outlays ; for instance, to make the peasants' horses carry loads, to cut canals in another man's property, to hew wood and burn charcoal on his neighbours' land, and the like. In a word, the Jew-farmer was regarded as the principal personage on the estate, next to the proprietor, and would have been more indispensable to Mr. Gologordoffsky than his head to his shoulders, if it had only been possible to transfer the mouth to some other part of the body. Without regarding such a close relation, the Jew, knowing the character of Mr. Gologordoffsky, insinuated himself into his confidence, and flattered his pride, solemnly assuring him that he esteemed Mr. Gologordoffsky as the only real gentleman and grandee in the government. In this way the Jew, enjoying his confidence, sucked like a real vampire the life's-blood of his fellow-creatures, grew rich, and, like the moving sands of the desert which absorb all the moisture of living nature, dried up the surrounding sources of riches, and spread around him poverty and barrenness.

Mrs. Gologordoffsky regarded herself as of much higher origin than her husband. She hinted that she would never have taken him for her husband, but for some particular circumstance in which a Russian Colo-

nel of Hussars played the principal part. In other respects she led a very peaceful life with her husband, and he did all in his power to please her. She selected her own society, and chose what diversions she thought proper, her husband having the honour of being invited to participate in them along with the family. Mrs. Gologordoffsky never asked her husband for any thing ; she bought in the shops whatever she wanted or whatever she fancied, whether it was necessary or not, and sent the merchants to her husband, who was obliged to pay his wife's debts, notwithstanding that it was with the greatest reluctance that he would discharge even his own. In other respects, Mrs. Gologordoffsky was a very good sort of a lady, although she did not at all meddle with the management of the house : she behaved civilly to the servants, but did not pay the least attention to their wants, and never heard to an end any of their reasonable requests. She believed from the bottom of her heart, that her kind word and smile were more valued by all of them than either good food, clothing, or wages. She dearly loved to read sentimental romances, still more dearly to talk with the gentlemen upon the tender passion, but most of all loved dress. Some girls amongst her vassals, who had been taught dress-making in Warsaw and Petersburg,* incessantly laboured at sewing and shaping ; almost every week, cases and packages arrived from

* The Russian and Polish gentry are in the practice of sending some of the young boys and girls of their household as apprentices to different trades in the metropolitan cities ; indeed, almost all the apprentices of the different artizans there, are composed of this class.

Petersburgh, with caps, bonnets, head-dresses, patterns, and all manner of frippery. Every day she dressed herself like a doll, although there should not happen to be a single guest, while, on the other hand, Mr. Gologordoffsky, in the midst of all his feudal pride, walked about at home in a greasy great-coat, made in a half old-Polish fashion, and appeared in the presence of his wife, as if he was the first of her most obedient servants.

The Misses Gologordoffsky, Petronella and Cecilia, were good-looking, affable in conversation with gentlemen, bold as dragoons, sprightly and cheerful.—They excelled in dancing and music, spoke French extremely well, sung charmingly, dressed with great taste and elegance after their mother's example, and along with her read sentimental romances. They were both tender hearted, and could not bear in their walks to go through the village for fear they should behold the misery of its inhabitants. Petronella was eighteen, and Cecilia, the youngest, sixteen years old.

Two sons, the one in his twelfth, the other in his fourteenth year, were real baboons for mischief, cunning, and the like. They were continually playing tricks either on their teachers, sisters, or servants. The greatest disturbances which they made were ascribed by their parents to the uncommon abilities and fertile genius of their children, on whom they rested all the hopes of their family, and treated them as if they were heirs to the Mogul empire. The name of *Infanta*, which was given to the eldest son in jest by an officer who happened to pass that way, was kept

up ever after. The servants who did not know the real meaning of this title, gave the little scape-grace no other name, and this tickled the fancy of the old people, who anticipated for their sons the highest ranks in the army, millions in their coffers, and princesses for brides, as the due recompense for qualities by which, in the world, every thing is lost and nothing gained.

With regard to the other inhabitants of the house, they were so numerous that I cannot now recollect them all, and when I was afterwards in Mr. Gologordoffsky's house, many of them were no longer there. Father Ezueet, being a Jesuit, was a riddle to all except the lady, whose confessor he was.

The steward was a walking whip, or instrument of infliction : all trembled before him, except the Jew and the squire's favourite dogs, whom he did not dare to punish.

The marshal and stud-master—irrational creatures, a sort of utensils for digesting provisions. Their whole duty consisted in staring vacantly on the crowd of supernumerary servants, bowing to their master and mistress, always saying " Yes," eating for four, and getting drunk every evening on mulled wine.

The law-agent belonged to that class of people, whom you might, without any compunction of conscience, hang first and try afterwards, knowing for certain that every week in his life, you would find good and sufficient reason for so doing. His soul was, it may be said, composed of nothing but hooks and eyes, to lay hold of whatever desirable objects might come

in his way. With him nothing was right nor wrong, white nor black. The laws he esteemed only as words whose excellence consists in their capability of being twisted right or left. In a word, the law-agent was professor of chicanery, and next to the Jew, first counsellor to Mr. Gologordoffsky.

The commissary—poor commissary ! His duty consisted in seeing that all the estate was in order, also in the chequing of accompts, and the collecting of incomes ; but, as every thing was in disorder, as the incomes were collected before they were due, and if the thing itself were possible, without any revision of accompts, the poor man from grief spent eleven months of the year in drinking, and, in the twelfth, composed a general statement, or, properly speaking, made a summary of the incomes, copied it out on a sheet of clean paper, and presented it to the squire, with the N. B. that they had been previously collected (although not in full) in the course of the year : this highly pleased Mr. Gologordoffsky, who took it for granted that he really possessed as great an income as appeared in the *Itoga*.

The most important personage in the house was the *Okhmeestreena* or housekeeper, not so much because she was acquainted with all the lady's secrets, and enjoyed her confidence in an unlimited degree, but because she had under her power all the strengthening juices, such as rum, cognac, bitters, and liqueurs.—The whole house treated her with deference, not excepting even the young ladies, who received from her preserves and confections. This respectable personage

would declare with a fastidious look her dislike to strong liquors, and although she, every evening, without waiting for supper, stretched herself out upon her bed with a fiery face, and a nose glowing like the end of a candle, *that* proceeded from an excruciating tooth-ache, which obliged her to apply spirits to her gums. This at least was *her* version of the story. There is no doubt that Mr. Gologordoffsky also put great faith in this medicine ; for he very frequently put his hand to his cheek, and made so frequent trips to the pantry, that the floor was indented with the marks of his footsteps all the way to the door.

Such were the people amongst whom I was the least by the destination of fate ! In the period of my childhood they all appeared to me uncommon, exalted beings, a sort of suns ! In process of time I learned their real value, and only make mention of them in this place, that the reader may not be astonished why they kept me in the house like a wild beast. Besides, we shall have an opportunity hereafter of meeting with some of the persons here mentioned, and on that account a previous acquaintance will be of service.

CHAPTER III.

Love.

ALL military men like to quarter in Poland, notwithstanding the poverty of the peasants, the extortion of the Jews, and the difference in the language and religion of the gentry. The truth must be told : the men among the Poles are excellent company, and the women full of the milk of human kindness, and generally more attached to foreigners than their husbands and brothers would wish. The quartering of soldiers, particularly of artillery and cavalry, is very agreeable to the landholders, the Jews, and the ladies. The first find a ready market for the productions of the soil, the second for their wares, while the women all find admirers, and frequently husbands, notwithstanding their profession of the Roman Catholic faith, the national antipathies, and the disagreeableness of a military life. Every long stay of a regiment in any district generally ends with a couple of marriages, and one or two dozen of anecdotes, propagated by old maids at the expence of young ones. At these anecdotes modest people are first of all thunderstruck with amazement, then they give credit to them, and finally consign them to oblivion till another opportunity. In general the Polish women are lovely, understand the art of pleasing, and loving tenderly, with all the refinements of romantic

passion, and, although constancy does not form a prominent feature in their character, yet, who in love thinks of such occurrences? There are no rules without exceptions; and is it possible to refrain from loving the Poles merely from fear of inconstancy? The Poles seem fully persuaded, that women are created for love, and they spend all their youth in agreeable musings. I may add that, in the Polish language, there exists a particular verb, invented for the expression of the most tender, and, in other respects, the most trifling occupation of life, to *romance* (romansować). This denotes a tender, respectful, passion, mutual pleasure founded on principle and attachment; but it can nowhere subsist out of Poland, where the free intercourse between the sexes is not only permitted, but regarded as indispensable. Italy alone excels Poland in the freedom of the women. In Poland nobody thinks it strange or improper for a married or unmarried woman to converse alone with a gentleman, to walk arm in arm with him at a distance from others, to receive from him small presents or entertainments, although she be neither attached, betrothed, nor related to him. Tender looks, soft words, sighs, complimentary verses, music, and even letters, excite no attention on the part of parents or by-standers. There they say openly, that such a one is in love with such a one, that he flirts with her; that such a woman is in love with such a man; and all this does not destroy a female's reputation. Tender lovers make one another mutual vows and promises, build aerial castles of future happiness, and after all separate in *sang froid*, without any

scandal. This is a place to call to mind the proverb : 'like priest, like people,' 'like country, like fashion.' In the meantime I may honestly assure my readers, that, without regarding the freedom of intercourse, perhaps no where in the world are there so many virtuous young women as in Poland, believe it who will. Of married women I make no mention, because - - - because that is not our present subject.

On Mr. Gologordoffsky's estate was quartered a Lieutenant Meloveeden, with a troop of Hussars. He had all the good and bad qualities of a young dragoon ; was brave and honourable, acquainted with service, but was frequently out of order owing to his giddiness and his extraordinary passion for amusements. Without being in the least covetous, he played high, and frequently lost his last kopeek* at cards, merely from ennui or from having nothing to do ; with a natural disposition to temperance, from mere frolic he would drink tokay as he would water, and champagne as quass. His principal occupation was gallantry. Of a handsome person, affable and clever, brought up in the circle of the best Moscow society, an excellent dancer, musician, and painter, versed in the productions of French literature, and gifted with an uncommon memory, Meloveeden, a spoiled child of fortune, became an object of love to all the young women for a hundred miles round. For him they made fetès, and always wished to have him at their parties, and what was most astonishing of all, the gentlemen, that is to say the landlords, not only were not angry with him for

* A kopeek is about the tenth-part of a penny sterling.

the open preference shewn him by the women, but even loved him. Meloveeden was, in the full sense of the word, a good fellow, open hearted, and with all his sharpness very simple. He did not quarrel with the Poles on politics; he drank with them to the health of old patriots, and sincerely abused the people in office. For this he enjoyed the confidence of the old and the friendship of the young landholders, who wished to form themselves into a sort of Meloveeden in Poland, or at least in Livonia. A high distinction which few Russians attained in Poland!

His heart was so unbounded that he could love fifty women at the same time, without any defalcation of affection, and without tormenting himself with sighs and sufferings. At that time, of all the women and girls, he gave the preference to Petronella Gologordoffsky, who, to say the truth, was passionately in love with him: you have no more occasion then, gentle reader, to guess from whom and to whom I was sent with the letter to the village! You understand now why I was promoted to the rank of English Jockey, and appointed to execute particular commissions for the eldest daughter of Mr. Gologordoffsky. You doubtless conjecture, gentle reader, that I filled the station of postillion of love. Exactly so: my whole duty consisted in standing during meals with a plate behind my mistress's chair, and carrying billets-doux from the squire's house to the lieutenant's quarters, which I fulfilled with particular attention, exactness, and speed. For that I was loved by my mistress, and consequently by the whole family of Mr. Golo-

gordoffsky. The appellation of orphan was no more to me a mark of nothingness ; on the contrary, it expressed tenderness and compassion, and was pronounced with sympathy and particular kindness. The servants, following always the example of their lords, caressed me as much as they had formerly spurned me. This change in my fate produced a sudden change in my intellect, which was naturally keen. In half a year I understood every thing which was formerly a riddle to me, surpassed in activity all the boys of the house, and became what is called a roguish or sharp boy. For all this fortunate change I was indebted to love.

After the agreeable days of love and pleasure, there was a sad change. The regiment received orders to move into another government, and this unexpected occurrence was quite a thunderstroke to all the female population of the district. The doctors travelled from house to house, the apothecary's laboratory was put in motion ; messengers galloped along every road, some to the town with recipes, some with letters. It appeared as if the plague or some epidemic disorder was spreading its ravages in the neighbourhood. And in reality, spasms, meagruins, vapours, nervous faintings, and vertigos attacked the fair sex. My mistress Petronella Gologordoffsky in particular, fell into a state of complete deprivation of all her faculties. She lay in bed, swore she would die for love, and refused to take the medicine prescribed by the doctor for a fever arising from cold. Her condition was really dangerous. Unceasing tears and sighs, want of sleep

and loss of appetite, might have given a bad turn to a slight cold brought on in the garden, during a late interview with her dear friend. She would take no advice nor consolation from her parents, sister, and companions, and was a little quieter only when Meloveeden gave her his word of honour to return as soon as possible, and confirm their tender love by marriage. The self-love of Meloveeden was touched by such a powerful expression of passion on the part of the charming Petronella: he had never in his life seen how people grew sick and died from love, and being both a witness and an object of a scene worthy to adorn the most tender romance of the days of chivalry. Meloveeden's feelings were overcome, and he resolved to reward the charming patient with his hand. But this promise was given in secret without the knowledge of her parents. They agreed to carry on their correspondence by means of the Jew-farmer, Meloveeden threatening to pull off his nose and ears if he betrayed him. He at the same time entrusted Petronella's second aunt by the mother's side to bring the match to a conclusion. The lovers foresaw the difficulty of obtaining the consent of Petronella's father, who fed himself with the hope that some travelling prince, no matter though he might be a native of Asia or at least some potentate, would ennoble his blood by a union with the Gologordoffsky family. But as of all human follies love is the most powerful, our lovers expected to overcome the ambition and stubbornness of Mr. Gologordoffsky, or, at any rate, to break through them by force.

CHAPTER IV.

Purposes of Marriage.

DREARY winter came, and Mr. Gologordoffsky had frequently to go to the Government-town on account of some of his law-suits which had terminated not in the most agreeable manner. His law expences reduced him to some sort of retrenchment at home ; and made him keep his family in the country at the time of the county elections, which drew all the gentry to the town for some weeks. This obstacle brought on a fit of melancholy on Mrs. Gologordoffsky and her youngest daughter. The eldest, without that, was sick enough at heart. In vain did father Ezueet preach upon the vanity of this world : they heard him with sighs, and interrupted him to begin the conversation upon balls and dresses. Mrs. Gologordoffsky lamented only that her absence at the time of the elections would give visitors from other governments and military people a very unfavourable opinion of the taste of the female sex with regard to dress, and that, without her daughters, they could not dance mazoorkas* and French quadrilles. After this preface began a critical disquisition upon all the females of the whole government, from thirty years of age down to sixteen, which ended with the conclusion, that it was only Mrs. Gologor-

* A fashionable Polish dance, also naturalized in Russia.

doffsky and her daughters who had no moral or physical deficiencies, and that all the other females were sadly neglected by nature. The *residents, confidantes*, and the misses living as companions, as well as the wives of the agent and commissary, and withal father Ezueet, confirmed with one accord the opinion of Mrs. Gologordoffsky, and this served as some consolation for her grief. If the tenth part of what Mrs. Gologordoffsky said concerning the females had been correct, it would have been the duty of the men to seek for wives not only in another government or in another empire, but in another planet. Fortunately all the mothers thought exactly the same of themselves and their daughters as Mrs. Gologordoffsky : it would be necessary then to believe in all the failings of the fair sex with the exception of the present company.

Meloveeden remained constant : he returned an answer to every ten of Petronella's letters, full of tenderness, with the additional attraction that it was written on rose-coloured or green or light blue paper : this was the fashion at that time in the country. Although I could not read these letters, I formed conclusions regarding their contents from the effects which they had on my mistress's temper, who, while she read them a hundred times, always began with crying and ended with laughing. Meloveeden gave her a description of his new acquaintances, various adventures, characters and anecdotes, which soothed my mistress in her forlorn state, and delighted both her and her sister. The Jew faithfully performed the duty entrusted to him, receiving from the post-office

and forwarding the letters with the greatest exactness. Notwithstanding that I was now of no more use to my mistress, she continued to love and caress me : with me were associated sweet recollections, and besides, Meloveeden had recommended me to her protection.

Spring came on, but the roses no more bloomed on the cheeks of the fair Petronella. She became from day to day more disconsolate, and could not without tears look upon the little birds sitting in pairs on the branches. All knew the cause of her grief ; but, except her sister, the faithful Masha and the Jew, no one made mention of her beloved, or soothed her with hopes. Once on a pleasant* spring-day at sunset, the whole family dined in the garden. Roasted chickens with salad, improved by the addition of sour cream, and a bottle of Tokay presented as a rarity by the Jew-farmer, put Mr. Gologordoffsky into such a happy disposition of mind, that the aunt took the resolution to avail herself of this opportunity to fulfil her commission. She made a sign to the young ladies to withdraw, and began her speech first with some general observations on the happiness of wedlock, where the attachment between the parties is mutual, alluded to the pitiable state of Petronella, who was a victim to love, and at last plainly declared that she was authorised by Meloveeden and her niece to beg the consent of the parents to the marriage, and

* The month of May in Russia is generally one of the most delightful seasons of the year. We have some such weather for days in England, but a whole month of it would be an unprecedented occurrence.

pulled out his letter from her bosom. Mrs. Gologordoffsky was silent during the discourse of her cousin, sighed, looked at the clouds and see-sawed with her head. On the other hand, Mr. Gologordoffsky at the beginning of the speech began to shew symptoms of impatience and chagrin. At first he redoubled his draughts of wine, then his face grew red, and at last, when he had finished the bottle, he grew quite furious, knocked violently with his fist on the table, making all the bottles and glasses dance, and roared vociferously, "Enough!" However the officious aunt was not to be daunted by all this uproar, but quietly said; "I don't see what can hinder this match." "Much, very much, Ma'am," replied Mr. Gologordoffsky; "and you do not perceive it, because you never inspected the archives of my house, and apparently never noticed the family-portraits in the dining-room." "But is not Meloveeden a gentleman," added the aunt; "his father and grandfather held the rank of generals." Mr. Gologordoffsky grinned savagely; "Ma'am," said he, "I was before you in my inquiries at Meloveeden concerning his family, and learned from himself that his nobility begins only with his great-grand-father." "Do you think that insufficient?" asked the aunt. "So insufficient, that nothing could be less so for entering into an alliance with a family which counts its nobility from the fiftieth generation. And so you see, Madam, that my nobility bears the same proportion to that of Mr. Meloveeden as fifty to three, consequently there is a *leettle* difference between us." At this he smiled triumphantly. "But

in our times the old and young gentry have the same privileges of distinction, and the same period of service conduces them to a higher rank,"* said the aunt. "That is not our business, Ma'am," replied Mr. Gologordoffsky, "You know our old proverb, 'A gentleman in one town is equal to a lord in another.'" "Consequently Meloveeden is equal to you," added the aunt. "It signifies," said Mr. Gologordoffsky, "nothing less, than that it is only gentlemen who are equal in birth, who are equal among themselves, without regarding difference of ranks. Besides, it is not antiquity of family alone which will give a man a title to be my son-in-law—he must have riches, immense riches, in order to keep up the dignity of the united families; but Meloveeden is as bare as a hawk." "It is true that Meloveeden's father spent all his property in the service," said the aunt, "but he has a rich and childless uncle who does not intend ever to marry. He has a great liking for his nephew, maintains him in the service, and designs to make him his heir." "What authority have you for that?" asked Mr. Gologordoffsky. "I have seen Meloveeden's uncle's own letters," replied the aunt. "That is all eastles in the air: it is a shame for you, Ma'am, to think of debasing my family to such a degree, as to propose to unite it with a man who has neither name nor property,"

* In Russia before a man can attain the lowest dignity, he must serve a certain number of years. This period is shorter for the nobility than for the other classes; the order of priests comes next in rank, after them the merchants, then the lowest bourgeois, and foreigners last of all, unless where a special exception is made in favour of individuals.

said Mr. Gologordoffsky emphatically, while he rose from his chair: "I beg you will never mention it again, if you wish to preserve my friendship." "Very well," resumed the aunt, growing red with chagrin; "but allow me to make one observation: you surely do not wish that your daughter should die for love, or should be forced to marry against her inclinations?" "Do not trouble your head about that, Ma'am," said Mr. Gologordoffsky: "girls don't die for love, but on the contrary become very happy when they are married against their inclinations. As a proof of that, there is your cousin,* my dearly beloved spouse, who was also in love with an officer before her marriage, and fainted thrice before pronouncing the fatal "Yes" at the hymeneal altar. All this was got the better of in time, and I flatter myself that Mrs. Gologordoffsky does not repine at her unhappy lot, although her husband wears neither sword nor uniform. "Is it not true, my love?" added Mr. Gologordoffsky, while he gave his wife an affectionate kiss for the first time since I had been admitted into the rooms. "Yes, it is true," replied his wife with a deep sigh. "Tell the people to saddle my riding-horse," said Mr. Gologordoffsky. "Ladies, will you please to take an airing with me for two or three versts, and I will shew you something new—a *kartchma* which I am now building on the boundary of my estate, and under the very nose of my neighbour, Protzessoaveetch. I have christened

* The cousins-german of a father and mother are called aunts and uncles in Russia, and the children of cousins-german are also called nephews and nieces.

this kartchma, 'The Thorn,' and it will be a real thorn in the side of my worthy neighbour. Isn't it true, Mr. Marshalek?" "It's a real truth," answered the marshalek with a low bow. "I will give orders to sell spirits there at a lower rate than they are sold in my neighbour's, and in this way I shall draw all his peasants to my shop. Isn't it true, Mr. Commissary?" "Exactly so," answered the commissary. "If he should think to drive his peasants away from my kartchma, I will summon him into court and bring an action against him." "Exactly so, 'tis a real truth," answered the agent, "we will sue him '*pro incursione et violentiâ*.'" While Mr. Gologordoffsky continued the dialogue in this strain with his servants, who, while the marriage was on the tapis, stood at a respectful distance, Mrs. Gologordoffsky went into her apartment to dress, and the aunt joining the young ladies, walked along with them into a dark alley, apparently relating the success of her application. I do not know what passed betwixt them, but, to my utter amazement, I observed no tears in my mistress's eyes when she returned to the door to take her seat in the carriage. On the contrary it appeared to me that she was more cheerful than usual.

CHAPTER V.

Ball and Elopement.

Mr. GOLOGORDOFFSKY wished to celebrate his wife's birth-day, and, at the same time, the gaining of a law-suit for ten *deshateens** of land. This-law suit had lasted thirty years, and had cost each party sixty times the value of the object in dispute. But as the main point consisted in gaining the victory, the public manifestation of joy served as a recompense for all the trouble and expence incurred during the progress of the law-suit, along with the ruin of the opposite party. For a week previous, invitations were sent to the relations, neighbours, and also to distant acquaintances within the government. The Jew-farmer brought two other Jews as contractors for the furnishing of wines and groceries for the feast. The said contractors, as I afterwards heard from the steward Kantchukoffsky, disposed of goods belonging to our farmer, who did not wish to sell the articles in his own name, as, in that case, he ran the risk of being paid with a bill or bond, which he could not refuse to take from Mr. Gologordoffsky. As the matter stood, there being no ready money in the house, and the corn not being yet

* A deshateen is a Russian measure of land, equal to 117,600 English square feet.

ripe, the wheat and rye on the ground were sold at so much a deshateen ; or, as it is called, sold in the stalk. Our farmer got a power of attorney from the said purveyors for the receipt of the corn after it should be cut and threshed, and three dozen of calves, once they should be born, with an obligation to feed them for eight months. In this way Mr. Gologordoffsky, by selling his corn while in the bowels of the earth, and his cattle before they came into the world, received a large supply of wine and delicacies for his table, which were to be all consumed in one day.— All the sportsmen belonging to the house and neighbouring villages were dispatched to the wood in search of game ; each of them was furnished with one pound of gunpowder and three pounds of shot, on the understanding that every one should bring forthwith sixty head of game. For each two pounds of powder allowance was made for missing three shots ; and for the remainder, they had to pay the squire at the rate of ten kopeeks* silver for each shot missed. The Jew-farmer presented Mr. Gologordoffsky with a list of all the peasants who possessed fowls, chickens, eggs, and butter. To these people the household-vassals were dispatched to take possession of all these articles either by fair or foul means. Those who gave them up willingly were to be promised in recompense an abatement of so many days labour on the manor :†

* Fourpence sterling.

† According to the written law of Russia, the peasants can only be obliged by their masters to work for them three days in each week ; but, in practice, this regulation is null and void.

those who refused were to be put in mind of the existence of Mr. Kantchukoffsky, and threatened with an execution. What is called an *execuzia* in the Polish governments is the quartering upon a peasant of some of the household-vassals, usually the greatest blackguards, who riot, eat, and drink in the house, till the peasant pays his dues, or complies with his landlord's demands. Sometimes these executions are inflicted as a punishment for not working well, for rudeness to the Jew, and for various other causes. The preparations for the ball during the week made an extraordinary stir and bustle in the house. The villages were scenes of rapine and robbery. The hungry vassals of the household acted like real marauders. They searched for fowls in the chests, butter amongst the linen, and eggs in the bosoms of the peasants, poking into every hole and corner, and insulting in every possible way the poor villagers, both males and females. It is the greatest hardship to which a country can be subjected, when people of the lower orders, uneducated and unprincipled, are entrusted with power. They endeavour to make others feel the full weight of their authority, and think that they excite respect when they make others tremble before them. The peasants and their women were continually fleeing to the manor-house with complaints that they were asked for what they had not to give, and swore that the Jew had made a false statement as regarded them. Vain complaints !

The peasants are *actually* obliged to do all their masters' field-work before they touch their own. In case of refusal, their masters can find means to punish them as they think proper.

Mr. Gologordoffsky believed the Jew more than his own wife and children ; he referred the complainants to Mr. Kantchukoffsky, whose look alone was enough to frighten them away. Day and night the work went on in the kitchen, and, in order to prevent stealing, sentinels from the stables were placed at the kitchen doors, who themselves stole pieces of meat, fowls and eggs, and in the night time carried them to the kartchma. All the servants were employed in cleaning and furbishing up the rooms. For the first time in the course of the year the cob-webs were swept away and banished with the family-portraits. Arm-chairs of oak and alder were covered with new linen. Mahogany furniture, which adorned two rooms in the house was rubbed up with olive-oil. The floors were re-scraped, seeing that to wash them was out of the question. All the looking-glasses from the other apartments, besides those belonging to the upper servants and *residents* were taken into the principal rooms, which, in addition to all other changes and repairs, were adorned, the day before the *fetè*, with festoons of spruce and fir-branches. The household musicians rehearsed and practised continually in the barn, where father Ezueet, who was allowed, through all the government, to be a great chemist, prepared fire-works for a surprise to Mrs. Gologordoffsky : two sportsmen worked under his direction. For the horses of the guests a separate stable was fitted up, and a provision of guests' hay was prepared ; that is to say, a score of cart-loads of rushes and weeds, which it would have been impossible to grind with a mill-stone, putting horses' teeth out of

the question. *Guests' oats* were a mixture of chopped straw with husks and siftings of wheat. The laws of hospitality require that guests, their servants and horses, should be filled ; but as the landlord's duty is confined to looking after the entertainment and treatment of the gentry, if the servants and horses are starved, all the blame falls commonly on the steward, in case any of the guests should think of his horses and servants.— Besides, with *necessary people*, such as the powers that be, of the government and district, there is another mode of procedure ; *their* servants and horses being committed to the special care of the marshalek and stud-master.

At last the day of the fetè arrived. A number of guests came in the morning. Carriages, calashes, breetchkas and koleemashkas,* occupied all the space between the stables and farm-yard. Almost every family brought along with it a score of horses ; six in their own carriage ; four in the breetchka, containing the male and female servants, trunks, and band boxes ; and a pair in the koleemashka, which contained the bedding packed up in large square chests, and the cooking utensils for the road stowed among hay. Single persons came with six horses, and very few with four. Some families came with a still greater number of these animals, as a badge of the importance of their owners, and I really do not think it amiss that Mr. Gologordoffsky should have contrived to feed them with bulrushes, husks, and weeds. This custom of going a visiting with a whole stud at the expence of

* A sort of cart.

another, has the same consequence to the entertainer as the inroad of a Tartar horde ; and if the landholders did not prepare this forage for guests, which is nothing but the shadow for the substance, two country balls would eat up their whole yearly stock of hay and oats. But, as no assembly can come together without cattle, the main point is to know how to get them decently off their hands.

After morning prayers, breakfast was served up, or properly speaking, dram-drinking, as the ladies ate but little, and the gentlemen drank more than they ate. Spirits of different colours and tastes* were unceasingly circulated, till the decanters were emptied. Then the gentlemen walked into the garden to join the ladies. In the mean time the cloth was laid in the dining-room, and, as fresh guests were continually arriving, four lackeys continued to serve up spirits and whets in the garden.

At two o'clock in the afternoon, when dinner was on the table, the musicians, led by the Kapel-meister, stationed themselves on the flight of steps leading to the garden, and played a Polish air. This was a signal for dinner, and all the guests assembled in the principal alley. Mr. Gologordoffsky offered his arm to his most distinguished guest, the wife of the Government-marshal. The Marshal himself led up Mrs. Gologordoffsky, and in this way, two couples in a row, they moved into the dining-room. The other guests

* In Russia the making of all different sorts of cordials and bitters is much better understood than it is in this country : even in the very lowest classes they are connoisseurs of that art.

also followed in couples, that is to say, the ladies alongside of the gentlemen. It is true that Mr. Gologordoffsky managed to place the most respectable guests higher, notwithstanding they came into the hall later. Before they were seated, he called them out of the crowd according to their rank,* and begged them to occupy the place nearest to the landlady, arranging these movements with various jokes and proverbs. The dinner was luxurious, and, although more than a hundred sat down at table, there was abundance of provisions. With regard to wine, the following arrangement was adopted. The common table-wine, that is to say French wine, was placed in decanters before the guests. The best wines of different qualities were carried about and poured out under the direction of the *marshalek* and *stud-master*. The first with three footmen on the right side of the table, the other with the same number of assistants on the left. On each side, the first lackey held bottles of the very best wine, the second with a middle quality, and the third with the most common, appertaining to the class of best wines with only one name. The *marshalek* and *stud-master*, by a previous understanding, took their cue from Mr. Gologordoffsky's style of address, what sort of wine to pour out for each guest: for instance, when he said to a guest, "I beg you will drink, Sir, do honour to my wine, I assure you it is worth trying;" then they poured out the first sort.

* In the houses of the greater part of the Russian gentry, who have never seen any world but their own, this practice is still kept up.

“ Drink a little wine ; it really is not bad,” denoted the second sort. “ You don’t drink any : hey, pour out wine to the gentleman,” marked the third sort. It appears that Mr. Gologordoffsky knew perfectly the tastes of his guests, for they all drank a decent portion, and regularly complied with the landlord’s invitation. Besides, I reckon Mr. Golodordoffsky’s behaviour very commendable : why treat a guest with what he is not acquainted, and when he is as well satisfied with the name as with the quality of his wine ? Some drink Champagne and Tokay, because they find that these wines please their taste ; others merely in order to have it to say, “ We have drunk Champagne and Tokay !” Who does not know the proverb, ‘ Do not throw your pearls before swine ?’ At the end of the dinner a huge goblet was brought in, adorned with coats of arms and inscriptions. Mr. Gologordoffsky poured wine into it, drank to the health of his spouse, and with loud cries of ‘ Vivat !’ with peals of music and flourishing of trumpets emptied it, and bowing to his next neighbour, added, “ Into your hands.” Exactly with the same ceremonial the cup went round from hand to hand. At last, when all the party refused to drink more, with the significant observation, “ that the day was not over yet,” the landlord rose, all the guests following his example, and each of them taking one or two ladies by the arm, walked away tottering into the garden, where coffee and sweet-meats awaited them. Hardly had the gentry left the dining-room, when the lackeys belonging to the house and to the guests, the musicians and

maid-servants, rushed in like harpies upon the remains of the feast, and without listening to the hoarse voices of the *marshalek* and *stud-master*, tore every thing to pieces, and emptied the bottles to the very lees. In the kitchen the greatest confusion reigned while the servants got their dinner. Without the least ceremony they helped themselves, took possession of the pots and pans, and satisfied their appetite which had been sharpened by the journey. In recalling to my mind all the particulars of this feast, I am persuaded that the one half of the provisions consumed would have been amply sufficient both for masters and servants ; but, in this case, order would have been requisite, and that was a thing quite neglected in the house of Mr. Gologordoffsky.

After dinner some of the old gentlemen went to repose,* the greater part of the guests seated themselves around card-tables, where some experienced hands with mere amateurs sat down to faro. All those gentlemen who during dinner had made loud complaints of bad times, and on the ruin of the corn-trade, produced at the table gold, silver, and heaps of assignats.† Some of them having lost their last kopeek, in the

* The *siesta* is not confined to southern climates. In the heat of summer, not only elderly people, in good circumstances, but almost the whole body of the people, take a two hours nap, usually from one to three, P. M. ; but, then, working people, in summer, are in the habit of rising at three or four o'clock in the mornings. Even in winter, the habit of sleeping after dinner, is by no means uncommon.

† Government paper money of which there is about six hundred millions of roubles (upwards of twenty-four millions of pounds sterling) in circulation.

height of their phrenzy sold their horses, equipages, cattle, and the copper kettles of their distilleries, and hoping to regain these, lost still more. Young gallants and old beaux sat beside the ladies, and, heated with wine, made declarations of love, or entertained the ladies with their nonsense and drolleries. At length, when it began to be damp out of doors, the ladies went into the house to dress and prepare for the dance. At eight o'clock the rooms were lighted, the music struck up, and Mr. Gologordoffsky opened the ball by dancing a Polonaise with his wife. The dancing continued till twelve o'clock, when supper was served.

This was as abundant and luxurious as the dinner, only the drinking took another turn. Almost all the guests made themselves beastly drunk. They sent away the musicians into another room, and began with declarations of friendship among the gentlemen, embracing and kissing one another, and promising to forget all quarrels and mutual differences. The ladies were called as witnesses to these reconciliations, and were obliged to become sureties for the fulfilment of the promises on both sides. On the well-known toast, 'Let us love one another,' (*Kochaymy sić*) being given, the guests drank a full bumper, falling on their knees before one another, or embracing. At last they returned to the ladies, and began to drink every one of their healths from their respective shoes. A gentleman falling on his knees before a lady, pulled off her shoe, and, after that, respectfully kissed her foot and her hands, placed his glass in the shoe, and in some

cases poured his wine into it, drank it out, and handed it to another. On a sudden a salute from two dozen of muskets and some swivels roused the convivial party. All ran to the windows and beheld in the midst of the court the flaming initials of the lady in whose honour the entertainment had been given. A joyful *vivat* anew resounded through the hall. The music struck up again, and the large goblet again appeared upon the scene. Some scores of rockets and Roman candles were launched into the air to the gratification of the spectators. But, whether from ignorance or awkwardness, some rockets broke upon the straw-thatch of the barn, and the wind being pretty high, in a few minutes the roof fell in, and all the offices were on fire. It would be difficult to imagine the consternation occasioned by this unexpected occurrence. The drunken masters were troubled; the servants did not know what to do. All gave orders, but nobody was disposed to obey them. They knew not how to manage the fire-engines, and then every one ran to the fire, with a bucket, an axe, or a pike,* and nobody ventured to approach the flames. They sounded the tocsin, and sent to the village for the peasants: but they, it appeared, were not over hasty in coming to the assistance of their lord and master. The guests ordered their horses to be put to as fast as possible,

* In all the crown-villages, every house or cottage, in case of fire, is obliged to send one of its inmates with one of these three articles, a figure of which is painted on a board at the gate of each house. In the towns, each police office is provided with a fire-engine and people to attend it. A particular officer, the Brand-major has the command of these engines and people.

and their things packed up. The household-servants laboured for the preservation of the silver-plate and table-linen from destruction. The phrenzy, disorder, noise and confusion, and running to and fro, were enough to distract the most cold-blooded of mortals; every thing was turned upside down in the house. From sheer terror I did not know what to do, stood on the outer steps, looked at the fire, and fell a crying. On a sudden Masha appeared. "Vanky! I am looking for you: follow me." We immediately fled through all the rooms to my mistress's bed chamber. Masha put upon my head my gold laced cap which lay in my mistress's wardrobe, gave me a bundle and a basket to carry, threw her capote about her shoulders and told me to follow her. We fled through the garden, leaped through a broken fence, and alighted on a field beside a thicket. There stood a calash drawn by four horses. In the dark I could not discern who was seated in it. Masha occupied the fore seat, a whiskered footman placed me on the portmanteau behind, and he himself sat on the box along with the driver. The horses turned and trotted slowly to the mainroad, which was about half a verst distant, and then set off at full speed. However much wearied I was with faintness and over exertion, I could not shut my eyes. The fire was continually present to my imagination, and I shuddered when I thought of my mistress's fate, supposing, according to my reflections at that time, that probably every thing in the house would be burnt, and that on this account Masha had saved herself by flight, along with me. I thought that the carriage be-

longed to some one of the guests. In the calash I heard a whispering, but could not distinguish the words, or the speakers by their voices. At length by day-break we arrived at the first post-house.

CHAPTER VI.

Marriage and Honey-moon.

WHEN I dismounted from the portmanteau and approached the carriage-door, I almost screamed with astonishment, when I saw Meloveeden and my mistress, Petronella Gologordoffsky, who, wrapt up in her cloak, was leaning with her head on the shoulder of her dear friend. “Do you know me, Vanky, said Meloveeden, with a smile.” “How should not I know the good gentleman!” In the mean time, Cosmo, the whiskered footman, who had gone to the Post-house with the *podoroajney*,* returned with the post-master’s answer, that there were no horses to be had. On hearing this, Meloveeden leaped out of the carriage, and ran instantly into the house, and I after him. The post-master, dressed in a morning-gown, was seated at a table, and turning over the leaves of a book, in which the *podoroajneys* were written.—“Horses,” cried Meloveeden gruffly. “There are no horses at present: they are all taken up,” answered the post-master coolly. “If you don’t give me horses this minute,” said Meloveeden, “I will harness yourself to the carriage, with all the two-legged animals in your house. Do you hear?” “You are pleased to joke,” returned the post-master coolly. “Wont you rest a little and drink a cup of coffee; and in the

* Government licence to entitle a traveller to hire post-horses.

meantime the horses will come home." "The Devil take you with your coffee : I want horses," exclaimed Meloveeden in a passion. "There are no horses," answered the post-master again. "You lie : nobody travels on this road, and I met nobody on the way," said Meloveeden. "Please to inspect the post-book." "I don't wish to lose time uselessly, and in place of counting the pages, will count the lashes upon your back," said Meloveeden, taking a step towards the post-master. "It can do you no good to fall into a passion," returned the latter. "Please to read upon the walls the post regulations : you will see that, for insulting a post-master, who holds the rank of the fourteenth class of nobility, you are liable to a fine of a hundred roubles." "Ah ! if you want a fine," said Meloveeden, "I will pay you treble, and give you such a bellyful, that you will not, likely, have many more fines to receive in this life ; but listen, in the first place, I wish to argue the matter with you civilly. What is the charge for the legal number of horses to the first stage ?" "Sixteen roubles," replied the post-master. "See, I am willing to pay you double, that is thirty-two roubles ; and, besides, I will give you three roubles for coffee and tobacco : give me horses, or, by God, I will give you a thrashing !" "I see I can make nothing of you," said the post-master, "I must give you my own horses." On this he thrust his head out of the casement,* and cried to the drivers,

* The advantage of having a pane of glass upon hinges is not so much perceived in this country as it is in Russia : where, in the winter-time, it is almost the only comfortable way of admit-

“ Hey, boys ! Put to the duns, quick, in couriers’ style.” “ You confounded rogue” ! added Meloveeden, on receiving the balance. “ What can one do, your honour” ! answered the post-master, “ we must live somehow or other.” “ That is one of the curses of this country : almost every thing is done *somehow or other*,” said Meloveeden, going out of the room. In the mean time the horses were put to, and we set off. For three days and nights we traversed the highway, without any particular adventures. At every stage there was some hinderance, owing to our *podoroajney* not having the words, ‘ on government business,’ written upon it. But Meloveeden, what with bullying, scolding, and bribing, got the better of the iron-bound obstinacy of the post-masters, who in general consider the performance of their duty to consist in dispatching couriers as fast, and detaining other travellers as long, as possible. On the fourth morning at day-break, within sight of a town, we turned aside from the main road, and after passing through a wood for five versts, arrived at a village, at the door of a peasant’s cottage. Here was quartered a friend of Meloveeden, Lieutenant Khvatomsky. He came out to receive them, handed Petronella out of the carriage, and gave her his arm to his quarters. They immediately sent for a Russian and Catholic Priest, who had been brought thither on purpose, and waited Meloveeden’s arrival. He shewed them his permission to contract a legal marriage, and the consent of the

ting a little fresh air into a room ; opening an entire window being quite out of the question.

Catholic Bishop or *Indult*, with what is called a *window*, that is, a blank for the filling up of the names ; in two hours the whole ceremony was concluded, according to the Russian ritual, in the church, and according to the Catholic, in the Priest's house. After reposing and dining with Khvatomsky, the newly married couple at twilight set off for the town, where Meloveeden's quarters were. To avoid surmises, he did not chuse to appear before the squadron but with a legal wife ; this precaution doubtless does honour to his character.

Meloveeden, before going for his bride, put his quarters in as good order as possible for her reception. He hired two rooms in the house of a rich Jew. But as cleanliness does not follow in the train of riches among the Jews, he got the rooms finished on his own account. The walls were hung with coloured paper, the floors painted ; in the inner room an alcove was formed of deals for a bed chamber, and the division was hung with carpets. The windows were adorned with pink curtains, and, from a female friend of his, the wife of a country gentleman, living, by a decision of the Consistory-Court, separated from her husband, Meloveeden got the use of a piano-forte, a dozen of chairs, a couple of lombard-tables, and a mirror. Some pairs of pistols, Turkish sabres and scymitars, a Persian horse-furniture, and two muskets, hung in the drawing-room in place of pictures. A pyramid of pipe-stalks, with huge heads and gilded stoppers, served also for an ornament to the room. In a word, looking to the place and circumstances, Meloveeden's rooms

were wonderfully well furnished, and hardly inferior to those of Mr Gologordoffsky himself. Besides all this, there lay on the piano-forte a bundle of music expressly ordered from Petersburg, and on a shelf in the bed room, some dozens of new French romances with plates. Meloveeden had neglected nothing to make his dwelling agreeable.

Petronella sighed with astonishment on entering the lodgings for the first time. After looking about her, she threw her arms around her husband's neck, and wept for joy and gratitude at such a reception.—Next day, Meloveeden, with his wife, visited the Colonel, pay-master and quarter-master, besides one or two married officers, in order to introduce her to their wives. For the course of a whole week, he was entirely taken up in making visits along with his wife, in the neighbourhood, and was everywhere congratulated on the beauty and amiability of the charming Petronella.

Soon after, guests came in from all quarters to visit them. Meloveeden liked good company ; had dinners, evening-parties, and suppers, which usually ended with a drinking-bout and cards. Time passed away, and money along with it. At first they bought wine and provisions for ready money ; after that, took them upon tick ; and at last, when the Jews saw that they did not pay their debts, they gave no more credit, and Meloveeden had to pawn his things.

Petronella's parents would receive no more letters from her, and returned what she had sent unopened. Meloveeden's uncle was also angry with him for hav-

ing deceived him, in saying that he was marrying a rich heiress ; and, for marrying without the consent of his relations, he refused to give him any more money. Meloveeden engaged in play upon credit ; he associated with gamblers who cheated him, and stripped him of all that he was worth. His circumstances became critical. Within six months after his marriage, every thing which it was possible to sell was sold ; nothing remained to pawn, nothing to gamble with, and nobody to borrow from. Meloveeden then resolved upon the last resource—to go with his wife to his uncle, in hopes that by her charms she would melt the obdurate old man. Having got leave of absence he sold his last saddle-horse, and, with the proceeds, redeemed out of pawn his calash ; and, collecting the remains of his property, his linen, saddles and fire-arms, he pledged them with the Jew, his landlord, in order to raise wherewithal to pay his travelling expences. Mrs. Meloveeden would on no account part with her dresses or Masha. She was certainly to blame, and so, after filling the carriage with band-boxes, and taking with them Masha, the footman and cook, my master and mistress set off for Moscow. They left me in their lodgings to take care of the things left in pawn, and the Jew was ordered to feed me on their account.

CHAPTER VII.

A rich Jew—Sources of his Riches.

IN a month after Meloveeden's departure, the regiment marched into other quarters, and I remained with the Jew along with the effects, as none of the officers were able or willing to redeem them and take with them the locked up trunks. Being left alone with no one to look after me or protect me, in the natural course of events I became the servant of the person who fed me, that is to say of the Jew Moses, the master of the house, who was reckoned to be one of the richest inhabitants of the town. His wife Reefka, * a fat woman of a low figure, whose head was decked all over with pearls, and, besides, some natural cutaneous ornaments not quite so pretty, kept a shop for silk stuffs, sugar, coffee, and dried fruits. Moses traded in the house, in wines, porter, and provisions for the table, groceries, Dutch herrings, cheese, and, in fine, all articles pertaining to gastronomy. But as a Jew cannot go on without dealing in spirits, in addition to his other business, he kept a tap for peasants and the lower sorts of people. The retailing of spirits is a most indispensable thing for a Jew in the Polish provinces. By this means he procures for the tenth part of their real value all sorts of provisions, and keeps his house

* A contraction for Rebecca.

for almost nothing. Besides that, by means of the *vodky*, he picks out of the peasants and servants all the secrets, all the wants, all the connections and relations of their masters, which makes the Jews the real rulers of the actual landholders, and subjects to Jewish controul all affairs and objects in which the precious metals and assignats act a part. In real fact, the landholders are merely gratified with the clink of the cash and the look of the notes, while the Jew is the real owner.

In Moses' writing there lay three huge books or registers of debts. The first contained the debts of the fair sex, contracted in Reefka's shop; the second held the debts of the landholders, or of such men in general as were called *Pans*,* for eatables and drinkables; the third book contained the debts of unfortunate peasants, who, coming into town to sell the produce of their land from necessity, kept only as much money as would pay their masters' dues, and drank the balance besides running into debt. In order to make the reader understand in what manner the Jews go to work with the peasants, I shall mention how Moses balanced one of his accounts, of which I was an eye-witness.

The peasant alluded to came into town the night before market-day with two loads, the one of rye, the other of wheat, and brought two cows with him for sale. He put up for the night at Moses' house. The wily Jew, seeing that the farmer was sitting down to supper with three of his companions, treated him with a glass of his best and strongest *vodky*. The peasant

* A term synonymous with what 'gentleman' was formerly in English, or *miles* in the Latin of the middle ages.

was uncommonly pleased with this beverage, and the Jew gave him another glass for nothing. When the peasant's head grew light, he ordered a *kvart** of the same spirits to be given him, for which he would pay. The Jew only waited for this—he knew his guest's free and open temper; and hardly had the peasant drunk this, when he sent to acquaint some of his other companions, and invited some well known town-drunkards who had a particular knack at insinuating themselves into the confidence of strangers. In proportion as the senses of his guests grew stupified, the Jew added water to the spirits; and, though the people at table perceived this, and gave vent to their dissatisfaction in gross abuse, the Jew patiently bore their upbraidings, and continued his operations till the greater part of his visitors fell asleep on the spot, and the rest managed to stagger into the street.

Next day, when the peasant, tormented with a head-ache, went into the stable-yard where his horses and cows stood, the Jew demanded payment for the debts which he had accumulated in the course of some months. The peasant earnestly begged him to defer a settlement till another time; but the Jew, being a good psychologist, knew the rule—‘*in corpore sano mens sana*’—as well as its converse, and would not agree to a postponement, wishing to take advantage of the stupefaction of his guest's senses with the fumes of drink, in consequence of his yesterday's intemperance and the weak state of his mental faculties. The Jew

* A Polish kvart is about a pint, English measure.

produced his book of debts written in the Hebrew* character, took a piece of chalk, placed the peasant on the opposite side of the table, and turning over the leaves of the book, began the settlement :—"Do you recollect," said the Jew, "how you lived here three days when you came in with loads before the summer-St. Nicholas†?" "How should not I recollect it?" answered the peasant. "The first day you took in the morning a half-kvart of vodky—is not that correct?" "It is so." "Now, here I shall note it;" and he made a mark with the chalk on the table. "Afterwards, when your brother-in-law came with Nicetas, you took another *kvalt*;" and, at this word, the Jew drew two marks. "At dinner you took again two *kvarterkas*,"‡ and the Jew again drew two marks without regarding the difference of the measure. "After dinner,"—but the peasant, who was all this time scratching his head and rubbing his forehead, interrupted the Jew, "Paney Arendaryoo!" (an honorary appellation given by the Lithuanian peasants to the Jews), "I really have not strength to go on, give me some vodky, for I have an insufferable head-ache." This was just what

* It is the Rabbinical character which the Polish Jews use, but the words are German, though nearly as difficult for a stranger from Germany to understand as the broadest Scotch is to an Englishman.

† There is more than one Saint of that name in the Russian Calendar, who have each their holy days; but the two most notable ones are that which occurs a little before Christmas, and the other in the middle of summer. The most effectual oath in Russia is that which is taken before a picture of 'St. Nicholas, the miracle-worker,' (*Nicolai Tchudotvoretz.*)

‡ A *kvarterka* is the eighth-part of a *kvalt*.

the Jew wanted. "Hey, Sorka*! Reefka!" cried out the Jew, "give the Hospodar a dram." (Hospodar is a title which the Jews, in return, give the peasants when they want to cheat them.) The peasant drank the fill of a large tumbler, making wry faces, and shrugging his shoulders, and the business took another turn. "After dinner," continued the Jew, "you took half a *kvert*." "Right." The Jew made another mark. "But when Ivan came in, you again took half a *kvert*." "No, I did not take it, but Ivan got it," answered the peasant. "Very well you did not take it," added the Jew, but in the meantime added another mark. "In the evening you took half a *kvert*:" "Right."—The Jew drew another mark.—"And in the morning you got one." "No, I did not," answered the peasant. "You did not get it," said the Jew, but nevertheless drew another score. "At dinner, next day, you took half a *kvert*." "No, only a *kvarterka*," answered the peasant. "Very well, let it be only a *kvarterka*," returned the Jew, but drew a mark denoting the measure of half a *kvert*, which contains in itself four *kvarterkas*. In this way was the reckoning continued: during all the time Moses' daughters, Sorka and Reefka, kept plying the peasant with vodka; and the Jew went on scoring, it mattered not whether the peasant agreed or disagreed with the items marked against him, and making no distinction of measures when they were less than half a *kvert*, but adding scores when the measure was more. At last, when the peasant's head grew giddy and his eyes dizzy, the Jew pulled out of

* A contraction for Sarah.

his bosom a piece of chalk with a split in it, like two blades of a knife, and with this double instrument proceeded to draw two scores, in place of one, at a time. When the table was all marked over, the Jew called in as witnesses to the settlement some of the peasant's neighbours, and they, after summing up the scores, reduced them into money : the unfortunate man had to give up to the Jew his best cow and all his wheat, although he was actually due, perhaps, only the tenth part of what he paid.

Almost in the same manner Moses behaved to the landholders ; only more artfully, and, in some measure, more delicately. However, the double chalk, overmeasure in wines, &c. were also made use of in his reckonings with the gentry, as well as with the peasants. The Jew, knowing that Polish *Pans* and Russian officers do not like to keep account-books, and are quite disgusted with long reckonings, used to fix upon a favourable time for his views, and pounce upon his debtors at the precise moment when they were either in a very merry or in an extremely low mood.

Moses' wife, Reefka, who also sold goods upon credit, and, in place of interest, received from the landholders' wives whole tubs of butter and coopfuls of domestic fowls, chose such a time for settling with her debtors, when they were in the greatest want of credit—for instance, before balls, elections, and marriages. In this sort of trade it was impossible to cheat by the same means as in the sale of wines and spirits : but the wily Reefka, taking advantage of the necessities and vanity of her customers, gave them short

measure and short weight, charged a double price for every thing, and, besides that, contrived to squeeze presents from them, under the pretence that she herself got the goods upon credit and was obliged to pay interest. Besides that, her trade brought her this advantage, that, by means of their wives, Moses had a claim upon the husbands, that is, on the pecuniary speculations of the landholders. They were even glad that, for silk-stuffs, and laces, for wine, rum, porter, sugar, and coffee, they could pay according to their pleasure, in wheat, flax, hemp, or other agricultural produce; seeing that the Jew, on these occasions, would purchase the remainder of their stock for ready money, at a valuation also fixed by the Jews, and commonly for the half of what the articles would bring at the regular markets and shipping ports. The landlords in these provinces have, in general, no idea of business, and receive their commercial information solely from the Jews. Throughout a whole government, there are only a few persons who take in newspapers, and they merely for notices of law-suits, and for the convenience of reference, if the conversation should turn upon politics.

All this Jewish trade, founded on knavery, is called lawful, because the Jews engage in it openly; gaining, however, much more in a concealed manner, by means forbidden both by law and conscience.

Moses loved me for my modesty and docility: he regarded me as his own servant, because Meloveeden, having withdrawn from the army and settled in Moscow, had relinquished his effects as well as

myself, not having the means to redeem them from pawn.

Moses also employed me upon the most secret commissions, and promised me mountains of gold if I would resolve to turn Jew. Although I knew nothing of Christianity, having been brought up like a wild animal, however, the mere name of Jew went against my grain ; and without positively refusing, I declined changing my religion, under different pretences, and in the meantime resolved to flee from such a calamity.

One day there alighted at Moses' house two agents of rich proprietors, on their return from Riga with money received for corn and hemp which they had sold. These gentlemen-agents, it appeared, were on an intimate footing with Moses ; they gave him charge of all their masters' gold, which Moses engaged to return punctually next day ; and besides, to one of the two, a man unexperienced in such transactions, he gave in pledge silver money of an equal value.

At night Moses shut himself up stairs into his own apartment, called me and his son Judelia to him, and told us that we must work all night. He poured out of bags upon the table great heaps of ducats, and set Judelia to pick out of the heaps those that were large and of full weight : he spread a cloth upon the floor for me, sprinkled some sort of black powder upon it, and ordered me to rub the picked ducats upon it, squeezing them tightly to the cloth. Moses himself sat at the table, on which stood two wax candles, and a magnifying-glass on a stand. Judelia gave him the ducats, and he, looking through the glass at them,

pared them with little crooked scissars. I do not know how many ducats passed through our hands, but, before day-light, I changed three pieces of cloth, and Moses collected a whole tea-cupful of gold-clippings. The agents received their money back punctually without minding the weight, and, in recompense for their civility, they got each a few ducats to himself; and besides, the Jew charged them nothing for their horses' feed, for board and lodging, or wine, and gave them some bottles for the road. In the evening Moses burned the cloths and melted the clippings in a stove constructed for that purpose in his closet. Our night's work procured him a piece of gold as large as a man's fist. We were always engaged in this sweating of gold from ducats, whenever there chanced to be in the house any of his acquaintances among the stewards or agents of rich Pans, or when merchants or gentlemen put gold into Moses' hands to transact any business for them.

One evening Moses ordered me to prepare for a journey next morning. Reefka packed up in a small trunk a suit of Moses' best clothes, a black half-silk coat, fastening from the collar to the waist with small hooks, a small silk cloak with large pockets before, a pair of grey stockings, new shoes, and a round broad-brimmed hat: she also put in as many shirts as she reckoned he would be weeks absent; that is to say, a fortnight at least. She filled a separate basket with provisions, which consisted of one bottle of spirits called 'Shabashovfy,'* on account of its quality, and

* From 'Shabash,' the Russian term for giving up or resting

because they only drink it when work is over, at which time they sing the merry ‘Mayofees;’* of two home-made goats’-milk cheeses, two large radishes, two dozens of onions, one dozen of herrings, two rye-loaves, one string of Jewish *krendels* or *barankies*,† and a small piece of roast kid. This provision was intended to serve five persons for a fortnight. Along with Moses there were the Jew-driver, his brother-in-law Josel, his nephew Khatzkel, and poor I. The trunk and basket were put into my hands, and, when I observed to Reefka that that provision would be too little, she fell into a passion and scolded me. “Hold your peace, you ‘Ghoy.’‡ All your thoughts are taken up on your belly, and you never consider that every crumb costs money: people have need to take care of their money now-a-days, for times are bad enough in all conscience!” “Aye, but you have plenty of money for all that,” said I, muttering with my head partly ensconced in the basket. “How dare you say that we have plenty of money? Hörsh tu!§ One would suppose you had seen and counted our money? Hörsh tu! Ah, you vagabond! Ah, you villain! How dare you say that we have money!”

from work; apparently a corruption of the Hebrew word, ‘Sabbath,’ or as it is pronounced by the Polish Jews ‘*Shaabat*.’

* The Jewish song of joy, which has no words.

† Hard biscuits made of wheaten flour rolled to the thickness of a rope, and formed into rings of two to three inches in diameter strung together like a necklace in forties or fifties upon a piece of twine; in which state they are sold.

‡ Infidel, synonymous with Ghiaour in Turkish.

§ A corruption of the German ‘*Hoerst du*’ (‘I say,’) (literally ‘hearest thou.’)

The Jewess shook with anger, threatened to beat me, and would probably have carried her threats into execution, if I had not assumed the defensive, and cried out in reply : “ Why are you angry, Panay Arendarsha ! If you touch me, I will cut and run ! ” Our outcry brought Moses to the spot, who, learning the cause of the disturbance, called out to his wife and took her into another room, where they scolded one another, grew quiet, and Reefka returning, patted me on the head, and gave me a large biscuit, adding ; “ Don’t be angry, Vanky ! I shall put into the basket for you a piece of smoked goose, and if our own Jewish folks wish for any dainties, let them buy them with their own money.”

One of the neighbouring landholders was then putting up at our house. In the evening before Moses’ departure, this gentleman ordered a tumbler of punch for himself and one for the landlord, and asked him to sit down beside him and give him his news. In general, the greater part of the small country-gentry regard the Jews as the best-informed people in every thing, even in politics ; and, in place of subscribing for a newspaper, expend the money which would otherwise be applied for that purpose, on punch and wine, and the time which would be lost in reading, they prefer to spend in dialogues with the Jews on the state of affairs all over the world.

The door of this gentleman’s room chanced to be open towards the gallery, where, by the light of a night-lamp, I was posted to strip feathers for the Jew’s beds, merely to prevent me from being a single minute

idle, and according to the Jewish saying, eating my bread for nothing. Every word was heard; but as long as they talked about trade, farming, war, and the governor, I took no interest in the conversation: however, when it turned upon Moses' journey, I pricked up my ears, being curious to know whither and why we were to go.

"It is strange, Rabi Moses," said the landholder, "that you who carry on such an extensive trade, should have thought of renting a kartelma on a property a hundred miles distant from your place of residence. I know that you make, besides, tar and potash there; but you might have all that, as we say, under your nose. I and every proprietor hereabout would be glad to have you for a tenant." "Particular circumstances, right-honourable Sir," answered the Jew, "occasion me to rent a place so distant from home. In that part of the country live all my wife's relations, and, from pure benevolence, I established my poor relatives in kartelmas. Potash and tar are more easily disposed of there, as that property lies upon the very frontiers. From all that I receive no manner of benefit, but take a journey thither twice a year to see that every thing is in order, to settle my accounts, and lay out the money for the payment of my rent: my wife's relations get all the profit, which I gratuitously bestow upon them." "It is laudable, very laudable, Rabi Moses," said the gentleman; "that example of yours is worthy to be imitated even amongst us; and to give them their due, there is too great an outcry raised against the Jews: for one such instance of dis-

interested love towards their relations ought to place their conduct in a more favourable light."

I was called to supper, and did not hear the conclusion of the dialogue. The reader will soon see what is the meaning of a Jew's disinterested love towards his relatives, and his benevolence without any advantage. Next day, a long *breetchka** was brought to the door, covered with oil-cloth, well smeared with tar and mud, to which three raw-boned horses were harnessed with ropes and the remnants of some gentleman's old harness: feather-beds and pillows were crammed into the *breetchka*, the trunks and boxes were made fast, and we set off on our journey. Moses, Josel, and Khatzkel, in greasy gowns and night caps, sat upon the feather-beds, quite close, almost one upon the other, and I at their feet on the clothes' trunk. As it was autumn, they gave me an old frieze great-coat to wear, which had been bought in the rag-market, and a cap which had been forgotten in the tap-room by some drunken footman: this cap was a great inconvenience to me, as it came over my eyes at every bounce of the *breetchka*.

I shall not describe our journey, which had nothing interesting in it, and continued for two days and a half.

On the third day, we turned aside from the main

* A *breetchka* is a long four-wheeled carriage, sometimes without springs, but generally having two hind-springs, and sometimes provided with a leathern cover like a gig or calash. Its form makes it convenient for holding a feather bed, and allowing travellers to stretch themselves out in it at full length.

road ; and about mid-day, arrived at a small kartchma which stood at some distance from a miserable village consisting of ten huts.

The landlord of the kartchma was delighted, it appeared, at our arrival, and immediately sent off three peasants with letters in various directions.

At night, Jews began to arrive, some on horseback without saddles, others in carts ; and by the time that the landlady had supper ready, about a score of them had assembled. As usual there was a collection of peasants in the kartchma, who came to spend the evening in smoking tobacco, drinking vodky upon credit, feasting upon dried fish and train-oil, and talking by the light of a fir-stick about their *ghospodeen* and his steward.

The Jews did not mingle with the peasants in the public room, but shut themselves into another apartment, where they talked loudly amongst themselves, speaking generally all at once. At last, when this noisy council was at an end, the tacksman drove out without ceremony the peasants from the kartchma, saying that the room was wanted to lay beds for his guests. To the discontented peasants, who did not want to shift their quarters, he gave spirits and tobacco to take home with them, and they went away singing to the village.

About midnight a gentleman arrived upon horseback : he remained half an hour alone with Moses, and I heard at the doors how they bargained : at last they shook hands,* and Moses counted out to the gentle-

* In Russia where most mercantile transactions are carried on

man some dozens of silver roubles and ducats. The gentleman, after drinking a glass of spirits to the health of the honourable company, and smoking a pipe of tobacco, seated himself on his horse and galloped into the wood.

The Jews after supper also separated. Moses and his fellow-travellers lay down, without undressing, upon feather-beds, and I upon straw.

A little before day-break, the tacksman awakened us, and we in two one-horse carts also proceeded into the wood, along a narrow road. I drove the cart in which Moses and Josel were seated, while the landlord of the kartchma with Khatzkel went before in the other cart. We had proceeded a long way through the wood before dawn, and at last heard the creaking of wheels, and the vociferous bawling of carters. Moses was overjoyed, and ordered me to make up to them. We soon met the cavalcade, consisting of fifty carts loaded with barrels of tar and potash. Only one Jew accompanied them : the drivers were peasants. In order to speak with this Jew, Moses ordered me to turn the horse and follow the carts. After proceeding on the way back about two versts, at a turn of the road, we met with a file of Cossacks belonging to the frontiers, along with whom was the very gentleman whom I had seen in the kartchma : he was not a military man, but dressed very plainly.

Upon seeing us he made the detachment halt, and with the officer of the Cossacks rode up to the carts.

verbally, the shaking of hands between the two parties when the bargain is concluded is an universal practice.

“Are you the owner, or where is he?” said the Cossack officer. “No, Sir: there he is, your excellency, your honour!” answered the Jew, pointing to Moses, who, in the meantime, alighted from the cart, and standing without his cap, made a low bow. “You rascals! you certainly are carrying contraband goods!” cried the gentleman in plain clothes. “How is it possible, Sir, that honest people should carry on a contraband trade?” said Moses, making a low bow: “May God keep us from doing any such thing! We, poor Jews, deal in tar and potash. Please to examine the loads.” The gentleman dismounted from his horse, took an iron rod from his saddle, and a hammer from a leathern bag, and began to knock upon the casks; to listen with his ear to the sound produced; to probe with his rod the inside of the casks, and at last he knocked about the peasants and the carts, and, as if it were from chagrin, cried out: “There is nothing can be done! Go to the devil with you.” During the search, the Cossack-officer remained on horseback, and attentively observed the proceedings of the gentleman in plain clothes: on seeing that all was right, he left us at rest, and went on his way with his detachment.

Moses could not contain his joy, and, when the Cossacks had gone out of sight, he clapped with his hands and sang out in a joyful key, repeating frequently, ‘*atrapirt! atrapirt!* (caught.)’

On arriving safe at the kartchma, the casks were unloaded into the storehouse, and the peasants were dismissed, being paid partly in money, but mostly in spirits, tobacco and herrings. After dining and sleep-

ing a while, Moses shut himself up in the storehouse with Josel, Khatzkel, and myself. I was quite astonished when he began to work at the casks. In the centre was tar or potash, but the two ends had double bottoms, and the space between them contained a variety of valuable goods, silk stuffs, linens, cambrics, laces, trinkets, perfumery, &c. They brought a brazier, stamps, black and red marking ink, and melted tin ; and while I blew the coals, Moses with his companions began to stamp the goods exactly as I afterwards saw it done at the custom-houses.

In the night-time there arrived some large Jewish waggons on which the goods were loaded, being now packed up in bales and cases, and sent home with Josel and Khatzkel : I with Moses went back in the same *breetchka* in which we had travelled to the kartchma.

Moses, as has been already mentioned, had calculated upon being a fortnight absent, and only chanced to be a week, because his goods arrived from beyond the frontier sooner than usual. All was joy and rejoicing in his house, and Reefka for next day, which was Sabbath, baked tarts with honey and poppies ; and *kugel* (paste fried in goose-fat ;) roasted geese, boiled *lokshena* (milk broth thickened with home-made macaroni ;) and *tzimes* (a sort of hotch-potch made of carrots and honey, with fat and spices ;) and besides regaled me with some spoiled wine.

Moses notified to his factors and agents, that he wished to commemorate the fortunate issue of one of his undertakings by a good action. In lending money

on pledge, he usually took two per cent. a week : on this occasion, for the length of a whole month, he resolved to take only one and a half from poor people and those in straitened circumstances. His *factors* gave notice of this act of Moses' benevolence to all gamesters, spend-thrifts, and drunkards ; but Moses had to endure the remonstrances and even scoldings of his wife for this useless generosity, which in Reefka's opinion might bring on his ruin.

CHAPTER VIII.

Meeting of two great Lawyers, the one going out full, the other coming in empty—I leave the Jew.

WINTER came on, and with it, in Moses' house, an increase of activity, and to me of drudgery. Loads of goods, and travellers frequently put up with Moses, and I had to be in attendance in the strangers' apartments, the very same as had been occupied formerly by Meloveeden. Besides having to light the stoves, carry water, and sweep the rooms, the Jew ordered me to listen, behind the doors, to the subjects of the strangers' conversation, particularly if they were people in office. I was instructed to find out if they were in search of any one ; if they had caught any thing ; and to attend particularly if the words '*false money*,' or '*contraband*,' should be introduced. Although I was not aware of the real purport of these words, yet, feeling that some Jewish roguery must be at the bottom of this curiosity, I had no desire to serve the Jew faithfully, if he had not sometimes bribed me with the promise of a reward, and had not hunger constrained me to be an instrument of Jewish policy. But I was so wearied of this sort of life, that I resolved to flee on the first opportunity whithersoever my good luck should carry me. There was only one thing which detained me ; an insufficiency of winter-clothing.

One day, when the sun began to leave the horizon, some carriages stopped in the market-place just opposite to Moses' house. He immediately ran to the street, and, approaching the principal carriage with a low bow, made an offer of his lodgings to the people in the carriage, cried up all the conveniences of his house, the cheapness of fodder and of all sorts of provisions, not forgetting to recommend himself as a man well known for his honesty and civility. The fair outside of Moses' house in comparison with others, was, I suppose, a more powerful argument than the landlord's words; and the carriages, to the great delight of the whole Jewish family, drew up at the door.

Reefka ran with her daughters to meet the gentry, while she drove me and the maid-servants to the strangers' apartments, to sweep away the dust, to clean the floors, and to clear off the table the fragments of an entertainment which Moses had been giving to the magistrates that same morning, having something to do with a charge of counterfeiting pawned goods. We had hardly got things in order, when the travellers came into the room. I stopped at the doors to get a look at them. First came a little, thin, pale-complexioned man, wrapt up in a fur great-coat. His eyes glared like those of a fox: with a single glance he examined all around him, and, passing into the other room, he immediately began to take off his coat. He was followed by a couple of boys, and as many girls, from ten to fourteen years of age, wrapped up and tied up like so many snails. The lady herself, also, a thin person with a frowning look, in the mean while,

hopped about like a frog. After her followed a train of maid-servants, nurses, and footmen, with bundles and baskets. The first expression uttered by the lady to me and the house-maid was the words, "Get out of the way, you creatures!" We, returning the compliment with a bow and a courtesy, made our retreat, and, behind the door, repaid her in her own coin.

In the common room I learned that the passengers were travelling with hired horses to Moscow, from the government-town, where this gentleman, whose name was Scotinko, had filled the office of Procureur.* Candles were put on the table, the tea-urn † was heated, and Mr. Scotinko's cook began to make ready supper, while the gentleman himself put Moses in requisition to converse with him and answer questions about the news.

In about two hours after, when it was already dark, a *kibitka*‡ drew up at the door, covered with matting and drawn by two horses. The landlord and landlady did not trouble themselves about meeting their guest. There entered a tall, stout, ruddy-faced gentleman, who, learning that the best rooms were already occu-

* Crown-advocate and public prosecutor.

† No one has lived in Russia without appreciating the benefits of the Russian tea-urn or *samovar*, which is not unlike the old English tea-urns in shape, but is heated with charcoal. When the teapot is placed on the top of the *samovar*, the strength of the tea is drawn off sooner and better than by any similar process in this country.

‡ A *kibitka* is a four-wheeled cart with a cover like the head of a cradle. There is generally a mat fastened to the head, which can be drawn over the rest of the *kibitka* when it rains.

pied, took possession of a little closet, usually tenanted by Judelia, the landlord's son. The whole baggage of this gentleman consisted of a small portmanteau and leathern pillow, which his man-servant, who was dressed in a bare sheepskin coat, carried under his arm.—The worn-out pelisse of the gentleman himself was a plain enough index of the contents of the portmanteau. Reefka treated his man with a dram, and learned that his master's name was Plootyagoaveetch, and that he was on his way from Petersburg to occupy the situation of Procureur in the very same town which Mr. Scotinko had left. A town-clerk who was at that time standing at the bar, drinking a dram of cordials, smiled very knowingly, and said—"There is a meeting of kites!"

Mr. Plootyagoaveetch, learning that his predecessor was in the house, immediately went to pay his respects to him. They seemed to like one another's company, for Scotinko invited Plootyagoaveetch to sup with him, and they spent the whole evening conversing together.

In the mean time, Plootyagoaveetch's man, having supped upon a bit of dry bread and quass,* seated himself beside the pot where Mr. Scotinko's servants were emptying out of the goblets the fragments of their master's lordly supper, joking together, and casting contemptuous looks on Plootyagoaveetch's man. When they learned that Plootyagoaveetch was going to occu-

* Quass is a sour fermented liquor, made from rye-malt, and is the usual drink of the common people in Russia. It is a very refreshing drink in the heats of summer.

py their master's place, they softened their tone, and treated the poor fellow with a dram. "What is your name, neighbour?" Scotinko's valet asked. "Pharaphont," answered Plootyagoaveetch's servant. "Look ye, Pharaphont," rejoined the valet, "learn to be deaf, and you will enjoy a perpetual carnival. Don't say 'aye' to petitioners, and allow nobody to enter gratis, but make them pay for a sight of your master, as they do for admittance to the dancing dogs. Why should you let them off?" "I would be glad to take, but will they give, is the query?" "To be sure they will, if you squeeze it out of them," answered the valet. "Learn to bawl lustily, '*not at home,*' '*engaged,*' '*indisposed,*' '*wishes to repose*' " ! but when they ask, if they may return, might they not wait, might you not let him know, say, 'I might do every thing in the world, if you were only discreet !' " At this all Scotinko's servants burst into a roar of laughter. Pharaphont continued, "All that is very plausible; but what is to be done with gentlemen whom my master orders to be admitted without previous notice : I suppose that I must be more civil to them without expecting any returns." "Nonsense !" answered the valet, "But you must manage them in a different style. Make your bow regularly, open the doors with alacrity, go before them with a candle, and pay your compliments to them on holidays. Oh ! brother Pharaphont, it is a happy life with the Procureur, but with the Governor a perfect paradise—the cup of bliss there overflows. We wept when we left the city. Our future lot we could not foresee ; our past was good. But with you in Petersburg what

sort of a life do the servants of people in office lead ? ”

“ According to the place, brother,” answered Pharaphont, “ there are some of us who act the gentleman ; there are others who wipe away their tears with a naked hand. My master was only at the head of a table ;* but a small spoke in the wheel of state. He himself was glad to wrench a kopeek from right and wrong indifferently, but did not always succeed. It only happened that I would receive drink-money when my master sent me with the copy of a paper to a petitioner, or if there should be much business in the house, and the petitioner, having nothing to do, should turn and speak to us. But all that was very trifling : the oldest hands could make but a poor job of it.”

“ But now your master will be a great man,” added the valet, “ Oh Pharaphontushka, † Pharaphontushka, I would give the best feather in my cap to change places with thee ! But my master calls ; good bye.”

All this time I was warming myself at the fire, and hearing these dialogues, envied the condition of other servants. Considering that the Jew had no right to detain me, I resolved to beg one of the travelling gentlemen to take me with him.

Plootyagoaveetch on his return to his closet, called for the Jew, who, learning that he was going to occupy an important situation in the government, had al-

* There is an immense number of courts of law and public offices in St. Petersburg, and every department has what is called a *Kantzellaria* or Chancery attached to it. Each of these chanceries has a head-clerk or director, who sits at the head of the table to superintend the inferior clerks.

† A diminutive of endearment.

ready changed his manner towards him, bowed continually, and apologized to the new Procureur that he had no better room for him, but, to make amends for it, offered him whatever he liked, and whatever was in the house, gratis. Plootyagoaveetch, seated on his bedside, was smoking a large wooden pipe, and began to question the Jew. I was on the other side of the wooden partition, and, peeping through a seam, heard all that went on. "I say, Moses, tell me your mind freely, and perhaps I may be of service to you." The Jew took off his cap and made a bow. Plootyagoaveetch continued—"Here am I, going to occupy the place of Mr. Scotinko, who says that he has been dismissed for no offence, owing to the intrigues of evil-minded people, in consequence of his fearless and strict performance of his duty!" The Jew smiled knowingly and shook his head. Plootyagoaveetch continued—"Mr. Scotinko has quite frightened me by saying that it is a shocking situation, attended with no emoluments but the bare salary." There the Jew interrupted Mr. Plootyagoaveetch's speech, and exclaimed loudly, "What do you say? Salary! Oh Lord!" Plootyagoaveetch continued, "Mr. Scotinko says he has spent all his substance in his situation, and gone through all his father's and wife's property, and retires with the wreck of his ruined fortune, taking with him only the respect of honest people and peace of conscience." At these words the Jew burst into a fit of laughter, and continued it so long, putting his hands to his sides, that Plootyagoaveetch had to stop him. "*Hörsh tu,*" said the Jew, "Mr. Scotinko

speaks of his conscience ! but where has he met with it, if he has not picked it up on the road ? After this we may expect the wolves to turn guardians over the sheep, and the Jews to seek salvation in a monastery, and the landholders to prohibit their peasants from getting drunk on *vodky*. I will tell you, Sir, your honour, that I knew this Mr. Scotinko, when his father was a tanner, a skinner, while he, a poor clerk, ran about the streets without shoes or stockings, and stole *barankies* and *krendels** from the Jews. He is a native of the same town where I was born. Now, Mr. Scotinko is as rich as the devil, has moveable and immoveable property, gold and silver, and so much money, that, I dare say, he cannot count it. He has also received ranks and orders. Oh Lord, Lord ! Mr. Scotinko has made so good use of his opportunities, that no leech of the law ever sucked such a bellyful !” There the Jew recollected that it was with a candidate for the same office that he was speaking, and corrected himself—“ Forgive me, Sir, your honour, but such a practitioner as Scotinko never was amongst us, and his conscience is all fudge : pure water runs through him, but the fishes stick. His situation is a magic wand for finding ready money. Don’t believe a word that he says. Mr. Scotinko lies even when he speaks the truth ; that is to say, he speaks the truth for the purpose of deceit. I will tell you one thing more—Scotinko was formerly as bare as a hawk ; but, in different governments, he has *counsellored* and *pro-*

* See note to page 65.

cureured for himself so much riches, that, though he is like a dried lizard in appearance, below the skin he is as fat as a Siberian bear." "But why should he conceal himself so before me?" asked Plootyagoaveetch. "He wishes to pass for an honest man now, as is usual with rogues after they have made their fortunes. Forgive me, Sir," continued the Jew,—“I am only sorry,” said Plootyagoaveetch: “I would have liked to get a lesson from him, that is to say, to learn *service*.* “Why not,” answered Moses, “but you don’t want teachers for that: as soon as you arrive in the city, take for a *factor*† our Jew Isaac, who filled the same situation under Mr. Scotinko; he will assist you in every thing; will seek out petitioners for you; establish an understanding with the country practitioners, and borrow money for you, of course without bill or receipt for the same. I will give you letters to my relations and to Isaac: rely entirely upon them, and they will not deceive you; only assist us in our small Jewish transactions.” “With pleasure,” said Plootyagoaveetch, “you may depend upon me; make ready every thing for to-morrow and, in the meantime, good night.” Moses retired, and I crept out from behind the partition.

* Under the name of *sloojba* or service, is included the performance of all the various duties to which a man may be called, under government. It seems originally to have been applied to the performance of military duty, and owing to the organization of the other departments of the state being in Russia very much upon a military model, the transition was natural.

† The office of a Jewish *factor* in Poland (pronounced *factoar*) is that of general caterer for all the wants of the person who employs him.

Next day, Mr. Plootyagoaveetch set off very early, while Scotinko lay in bed on account of indisposition. The one made haste for fear of losing a single day of hay-making while the sun shone ; the other had no cause to bestir himself—he had reached his goal.

Mr. Scotinko's little boys went to play under the roof of the stable-yard,* and I, having been accustomed to amuse myself with my master's children when I lived with Mr. Gologordoffsky, at their request, joined them in their frolics, assisted them to harness goats to a little carriage, made a swing for them of old rope harness, and joyfully put up with the buffeting and unpleasantness of being pelted with snow-balls.—Reefka called me from play to work, but the young masters Scotinko begged their father to order me to play with them, and the Jewess was obliged to submit. Although I was younger than Scotinko's children, I had much more sharpness than they ; accordingly, without delay, I availed myself of their inclination towards me, and easily persuaded them to beg their parents to take me with them. After dinner, Mr. Scotinko called me to him.

“ What brought thee into the Jew's service ?” asked Mr. Scotinko. I related to him the story of Melo-veeden's marriage and his departure for Moscow, and, falling at his feet, begged him to deliver me from the Jews, promising to serve him faithfully all my life.—Mr. Scotinko looked at his wife, and she gave a ver-

* The stable-yards attached to all the peasant's houses and hostels, baiting houses, and the like in Russia, are partly roofed in ; in Poland they are often entirely covered with a roof.

dict in my favour. Scotinko immediately called for Moses. "By what right dost thou hold this boy"? said he roughly. Moses hemmed thrice before he pronounced the first word of his answer. "His master, Meloveeden, was owing me money, and left in pawn effects with this boy." "And thou darest to take in pawn Christian subjects?" rejoined Scotinko. "Art thou aware of the ukaze which prohibits Jews from having Christians in their service? Art thou aware of the ukaze against usurers? Shew me this instant the deed by which you hold that boy—where is his passport?"* The Jew was frightened. "*Hörsh tu!*" said he in a low tone of voice. Then, making a most profound bow, he added—"I have no papers regarding him: the affair was settled by word of mouth." "And so you keep in your house people without passports," said Mr. Scotinko. "Hey! bring paper and ink; we will do your business immediately. I shall give in a declaration to the authorities here, and, on my arrival in Moscow, shall not fail to present a petition.† In the meantime I shall take the boy with myself on my own acknowledgement." "Your honour!" said the Jew; "is it worth our while to quarrel about such trifles? You wish to take the boy: take him in

* A passport, my readers are probably aware, is a *sine qua non* in Russia. The majority of the people being in a state of bondage, and the country embracing such a vast extent, escape from their masters would be easy and frequent, if it were not for the law, which imposes a very heavy fine for the harbouring of people not having a passport.

† All the affairs of which the courts of law take cognizance are brought before them in the form of a petition.

God's name. I shall make no obstacles ; only give me an acknowledgement, in order that I may be able to account for him to Meloveeden, when he asks. And that you may have no cause to complain of my behaviour, for your day's lodging here and for every thing which you have got in my house, I shall not charge a kopeek ; nay, over and above that, I shall put into your carriage a half-dozen of Tokay, the like of which you will not find within five hundred miles. Will that satisfy you ?" " Very well," said Scotinko ; " but has the boy any warm clothes for the road ?" " No, but I shall provide that immediately, and, by to morrow, every thing shall be in order." Mr. Scotinko sent us out of the room, and ordered me to make ready for the road.

" Darned rascal !" exclaimed Moses on meeting Rebecca. " This *khapoon* is taking away our Vanky." Reefka got into a violent passion, but Moses said something in their own jargon, which pacified her, and she patted me on the head. Moses took me up stairs into his own room, sat down in his arm-chair, and said ; " Vanky ! you are a good boy, and will surely not forget all the kindness which you have received from us ?" " What kindness ?" asked I. " How ! have we not given you meat and drink, and clothes ?" " But have not I worked from morning to night ?" " *Hörsh tu !* You know, every body must work. But tell me : you have not been ill treated here ?" " Not particularly well," answered I bluntly : " much drudgery and poor fare." " Don't slight us, Vanky : you might have fared worse with another. We have,

at least, never beaten you, while other masters make their people work without feeding them, and flog them into the bargain, without even giving them liberty to cry." "I cannot complain of you for that: you did not beat me," said I. "And therefore you ought to be grateful to us: here is a whole half-rouble piece to you for your services; and, if any one should question you about us, say that you neither saw nor heard any thing bad about us, and that we are poor people always pinched for money." "But the ducats, you know." "What ducats? The boy is crazed: you never saw any ducats with us." "Be it so," answered I, merely to get rid of the Jew. "You yourself have seen how we love the Christians, and assist them, sell spirits and grain on credit to the peasants, and give alms to poor people." "Dry bread," said I, "which you would throw to the cattle, if no beggar should make his appearance." "Vanky, Vanky, don't slight us! Here is another half-rouble piece to you. Isn't it true that we are good, compassionate, poor people?" I held my tongue. Moses put the money into my hand and kissed me, adding: "You will surely speak well of us?" "I will, I will;" said I, running down stairs to my new masters. The Jew bought me a second-hand sheepskin coat, a cap and gloves: Reefka gave me for the road a whole string of *barankies*, part of which I ate, and part gave away to Mr. Scotinko's sons' dogs in virtue of their authority over me. I passed the night in pleasant musings upon my adventures. The hope of meeting with my good Meloveeden kept up my spirits: I wished for

nothing more in life. Next morning every thing was ready for our departure. I was ordered to place myself behind the carriage, along with the valet, and we set off.

CHAPTER IX.

Unexpected meeting—Change of life—My Aunt—My Education.

WE arrived, without any adventure, in Moscow. A house had been previously hired and furnished for our accommodation by Mr. Scotinko's house-steward, who had been dispatched some months previous. Mr. Scotinko had in Moscow many acquaintances among the people in office, who assembled at his house with their wives once a week to dinner, and twice a week to spend the evening at cards. Mr. Scotinko, soon after his arrival, engaged a French governor for his sons, and a French governess for his daughters. Besides that, they had teachers, who came into the house every day to give them lessons. My duty consisted in waiting upon the sons, keeping the school-room clean, and being in attendance during the lessons, to fulfil the different orders of the teachers and young gentlemen. Besides that, I waited at table during dinner, and executed the commissions of Madam Scotinko in different shops; also carried through the town her notes to her different friends, went to the Apothecary's shop for medicines, and fed the birds and lap-dogs which were favourites of my mistress. I was, what is called, chamber-boy. I wore a Cossack-dress, and went by the name of *Kazatchok*, (little Cossack.) Gifted by nature with a happy memory and quick perception, in

a few months, I learned from the cook to read and write Russian, and the first four rules of arithmetic ; and, from being present during the lessons of my master's sons, in the course of half a year, I picked up a number of French and German words, and formed some acquaintance with geographical and historical names. The teachers, observing my docility and curiosity, examined me sometimes for their own amusement, concerning what I recollected of the lessons which I had heard, and explained to me what I did not understand. In this way I became a learned man among the lackeys. I was content with my lot, comparing it with my situation under the Jew ; and, although the servants in general in Mr. Scotinko's house were kept and fed very indifferently, more from neglect than niggardliness, yet I had my own perquisites, which made up for other insufficiencies. I got the fragments of the children's breakfasts and suppers ; got presents of money for gingerbread in the dressmakers' and apothecaries' shops, and in other places where I chanced to be on my mistress's business : besides that, I played at *orlenok*,* with the neighbouring boys and vorreuters,† and partly by good luck, partly by skill, almost always gained. I thus succeeded in acquiring for myself a small capital, which was sufficient to serve the purpose of allaying my hunger, and gratifying my palate. In this way I passed a year and a half in Mr.

* 'The little eagle,' a game at cards.

† The coachmen do not drive four-in-hand in Russia, but the two front horses are managed by a little boy called from the German 'vorreiter,' literally 'fore-rider.'

Scotinko's house at Moscow, without caring for the future, or anticipating any amelioration of my condition. My most flattering hopes went no farther than to occupy, in time, the situation of valet de chambre to one of my master's sons, or to return to my former benefactor Meloveeden, whose affability and goodness of soul had made a lasting impression on my heart and memory.

But fate ordered it otherwise. I was one day in a dressmaker's shop, waiting till some work should be finished for my lady. On a sudden there entered the shop, a lady, dressed very elegantly, who began to look at different articles which were for sale. Her eyes happening to fall upon me, she stopped and looked stedfastly with particular emotion. She again fell to examine the goods, but, as it were by some involuntary attraction, her eyes incessantly wandered towards me. At last, she could no longer get the better of her inward feeling, but came up to me. "Whose boy are you, my dear?" said the lady affably, patting me upon the cheek. "I myself don't know;" said I. "I am, at present, a servant with Mr. Scotinko." "Who is this Mr. Scotinko?" "A rich gentleman who came to live in Moscow about a year and a half ago, and I entered his service on the way." "And so you are free, and not a serf?" "I really don't know whose I am: I was brought up in Byalo-russia in the house of Mr. Gologordoffsky." At these words the lady interrupted my recital, hastily left the shop, and ordered me to follow her. She sent her footman to the carriage, as he stood waiting on the steps before

the door, and there continued the dialogue with me. "What is your name?" "Ivan." "How old are you?" "I don't know." "You say that you were brought up in the house of Mr. Gologordoffsky," said the lady: "but who are your parents?" "I don't know: I am an orphan." All this time, I stared in the lady's face, and observed that she blushed, and that her eyes were filled with tears. "Ivan!" said she, in a low tone of voice; then, after a short silence, she added: "Vanushka,* have not you a mark on your left shoulder?" "But how do you know that, Ma'am, that I have a great scar on my shoulder?" At these words, the lady put her handkerchief to her eyes, and remained for some time silent. At last she kissed me, asked where Mr. Scotinko lived, gave me a silver rouble, and ordering me not to tell any body of our meeting and of her questions, went into her carriage, saying, "We shall see one another soon."

My eyes followed the good lady to her carriage, and I returned to the shop. As I had an agreeable countenance in my childhood, I was frequently taken notice of by people who did not know me, particularly females, who would stop me on the street; but no similar adventure had made such a powerful impression upon me as this meeting. My heart beat strongly: the lady's beautiful features, and her black eyes, were continually present in my imagination; and her soft voice resounded in my ears. I returned home sad. All night I dreamed of the good lady; and sometimes

* A diminutive from Ivan.

awoke and fell a crying from grief and vexation, that I had not met with such kind masters. I wished to get into the service of that kind, affable lady ! Of other feelings I had no idea.

Next morning, at twelve o'clock, there stopped at our gate a coach and six, with three livery servants. One of the footmen came into the lobby, and begged to let Mr. Scotinko know, that prince Tchvanoff wished to speak with him upon very important business. Mr. Scotinko who was sitting in his morning-gown, immediately put on his coat, ordered the servants to request the prince to come in, and waited for him in the lobby. The prince was a man of about seventy years of age ; his face was covered with wrinkles and red spots ; his bald head was covered with a paste made of powder and pomatum ; and the remains of his grey hairs were formed into curls and tied with a queue. He could hardly move his legs, and his footmen took him under their arms with as much precaution as if he had been made of glass, and might be shivered to pieces by the smallest slip. Mr. Scotinko received the prince with low bows, and conducted him into the drawing-room ; but the prince wished to speak with him in private, and they entered into a closet where they remained about an hour. At last, Mr. Scotinko looked out of the closet and called me. I thought that he wanted me to fetch something, but what was my astonishment when Mr. Scotinko, pointing me out to the prince, said, " There he is ;" when the prince, stroking my head, and patting my cheeks, muttered something in a foreign language. " Vanky," said Mr. Scotinko to

me, "go immediately with his highness. I have no longer authority over you : here is your benefactor." I was so thunderstruck with these words, that I made no answer, but stood motionless. The prince rose, shook hands with Mr. Scotinko, and tottered towards the door, leaning upon my shoulder. In the lobby, Mr. Scotinko said to me : "Now, adieu, Vanya : you are no more my servant : go with his highness." The valet gave me my cap, and I went out with the prince into the street. I was almost frightened, when the prince ordered me to sit in the carriage alongside of himself. I was in such confusion, that I did not dare to lift my eyes or to take my breath. Fortunately the prince was silent all the way, and slumbered. My heart fluttered, when we halted beside an elegant house. Ignorance of one's lot occasions sometimes more uneasiness than real misfortune.

We had hardly entered the rooms which glittered with gold, bronze, and marble, and were adorned with carpets and pictures, when the prince sat down on a sofa, and ordered the house-steward to be sent for. I, the mean while, stood at the doors, and looked upon every thing with a curious eye. The steward entered. "Take this boy," said the prince, "and go with him to a tailor and sempstress ; buy for him the best sort of linen, and fashionable clothes for his time of life ; dress him as neat as a doll, and as fine as a prince ; get his hair cut, wash him, clean him ; and after doing all this as well as possible, take him to Adelaida Petrovna. Dost thou hear ?"—"I hear, your highness." "Let every thing be ready by six o'clock : I shall

myself be at her house in the evening." The steward beckoned to me, and I followed him.

Without farther questions he seated me beside himself on a hackney-droshky, and took me to a tailor. Here he left me, ordering the tailor to execute immediately the prince's commission, and saying that he would come back for me in a few hours. The tailor's wife went out and bought linen for me. The tailor sought out a beautiful ready-made jacket and trowsers of violet-coloured kerseymere, with gilded buttons. The shoemaker brought shoes for me. My hair had been cut in a circular form, in the old Russian fashion.* The hair-dresser cut it in the prevailing mode, and put it into curls. The landlady soon returned with linen, and with an embroidered shirt-neck. She herself washed me, dressed me, and could hardly keep from kissing my rosy cheeks. I scarcely knew myself when I looked into the mirror, and perceived with inward satisfaction that I was prettier than the young Gologordoffskys, Scotinkos, and all the boys whom I had seen in their houses. The house-steward soon returned, and was likewise struck with my metamorphosis. We again mounted a hackney-droshky, and drove to the place pointed out by the prince. I asked no questions, being quite absorbed in admiration of my clothes.

* This operation is often performed among the peasants by clapping a wooden bowl upon the head of the person to be operated upon, and clipping all round by the brim of the bowl. In addition to this, among the Russian methodists, or *starovayries*, (old believers), in some provinces, they clip a considerable space round the crown quite bare.

On arriving at a little neat wooden house, we stopped, and the steward led me by the hand along with him. A footman opened the door into the dining-room; and I almost fainted with joy when I saw the very same lady who, the day before, had questioned me at the dressmaker's. The lady herself screamed for joy, threw her arms about my neck, kissed me, and leading me into another room, dismissed the steward. When we remained alone, the lady sat down on a sofa, seated me beside her, ordered me to take off my jacket, and, on examining the mark on my left shoulder, fell a crying. I also cried, thinking that the good lady had some cause for her grief. "Vanya," said she to me, "you will now be no more a servant. You are my own nephew, my sister's son. You ought to call me aunt, and not to tell any body what you were before. You will now be a young gentleman, exactly such as the sons of Gologordoffsky and Scotinko."—"Oh no, aunt!" said I, "I want to be much better than they. They behave very ill to poor boys and servants, raise disturbances, cheat their parents, and don't learn their lessons." In place of any answer my aunt kissed me. "Do you want any thing, Vanya," asked she. "I am hungry, aunt." She rang the bell, and a maid servant appeared, whom she ordered to give me something to eat, telling her who I was, and ordering her to shew me into a separate room, where all was to be arranged for my comfort.

My aunt, Adelaida Petrovna, was a woman of thirty years of age, but to appearance was much younger. She was a beauty in the full sense of the

word. Her black hair, which was soft as down, gave a particular shading to her delicately white face. A fresh rosy hue adorned her cheeks. The lines of her countenance were regular, and enlivened with a sweet smile and expression of goodness of heart. Her black eyes, rendered more expressive by long eyelashes and finely-arched eyebrows, drew upon them the gaze of the by-stander, like the attraction of the magnet for iron. Her full rosy lips, and teeth than which nothing could be whiter, were an irresistible temptation to kiss her charming little mouth. She was of a tall form and elegant figure. In a word, my aunt's exterior was enchanting ; but her affable and agreeable behaviour added charms to her beauty. She spoke French and Italian, played exceedingly well on the piano-forte, and sang like a nightingale. She lived very genteelly. Her house was comfortable, and well furnished. She had in her service two footmen, two maid servants, a man-cook, a coachman, and a porter for dirty work. The stable contained a pair of good horses. There was plenty of every thing in the house. She had many visitors, but very few of them females ; and they consisted only of some actresses and foreigners. Once a-week she had a musical *soirée*, when there was an assembly of virtuosos and connoisseurs, for the most part elderly gentlemen. Middle-aged people and young men came only when any of their relations brought them, and that was very seldom. Besides this, my aunt had, every day, guests at tea, and some to dinner and supper. Prince Tchevanoff was a daily visitor, and held in a manner the

rank of *papa* in the house. The servants were ruled by him as if he were their master; and my aunt obeyed him in every thing, though sometimes against her will, as I observed. Sometimes the prince quarrelled with my aunt when they were alone, and she always shed tears upon such occasions, and would even at times fall into fits. Then the prince would kiss her hands, beg forgiveness; and friendship would be re-established on its former footing. Only, I observed clearly and understood, that the prince's visits were not agreeable to my aunt: she always made wry faces when his carriage drew up at the door, and always had a pleasant smile on her countenance when she drove out along with the prince.

My aunt was one of those women who regard beauty as of the greatest value, and dress as the most indispensable requisite of life; and her principal gratification was derived from the admiration of the men, and the envy of the women. The greatest part of her time was spent in contriving how she might dress, and appear in public, with all the splendour of beauty and wealth. Besides, her favourite occupation, music, she made use of only as a cover, to bring to her house people who moved in good society, who merely, on that account, passed themselves off for amateurs of that art. She was the widow of an Italian named Baritono, who had at one time been a teacher of music and singing. I knew nothing of the origin of my aunt, and she never spoke with any one either about her own relations, or about the place of her birth. She called herself a Russian, and went occasionally

to the Russian church to morning and afternoon prayers,* but only on the principal holidays. At the time when I became an inmate of her house, she was upon particularly friendly terms with a young gentleman of scanty fortune, who held some petty situation under government, Semen Semenoveetch Plaiseereen. He executed all my aunt's commissions, squired her to the theatre, to concerts, and promenades, and would pop into the house several times in the course of the day, but always when old prince Tchvanoff was not there. Plaiseereen would only sometimes on the musical *soirees* address himself to my aunt in the presence of the prince, and would then behave towards her with a distant respect, as if there was no particular intimacy between them, but only a musical acquaintance. My aunt's other confidant was a French abbot, Pretatout, a man of about five-and-forty, of an agreeable exterior, and very pleasant company. He was the domestic friend of prince Tchvanoff, and lived with him in the capacity of toad-eater; received a salary, or, properly speaking, a pension, for the education of his son (who was already in the service at Petersburg); kept the prince's library in order, looked after the pictures, and was his agent in all private transactions. Abbé Pretatout was likewise almost every day with

* There are four services in the Russian Church every day in the week, viz.—The Za-ootrenoy, at about four o'clock in the morning; the Rano-obeydny, at six; the Pozdno-obeydny, at nine; the Vetcherny, at three in the afternoon in winter, and four in summer. In addition to these, when next day is a holiday, and every Saturday evening, there is a fifth service, at seven o'clock, called the Vsey-notchny.

my aunt, but never met with Plaiseereen. My aunt observed the greatest order in all her affairs, and a particular time was fixed for every visit. Her house had four entrances, each from a separate room and a separate side: one from the street, another beside the gateway, a third from the backdoor, and a fourth from the garden. The visitors could come and go, if my aunt wished it, without meeting one another. All who visited my aunt, appeared strongly attached to her; but I was much astonished that the very same gentlemen who were so very friendly with her at home, would not make a bow to her on the street or in the theatre, when they were in company with other females, but would always turn aside, as if they did not observe her. The females would look at her with a smile or a scowl, and on doing so would almost always whisper between themselves. But my aunt was so good that nothing excited her anger. She was very affable to her servants, and only sometimes got into a passion with her chambermaid, when, in assisting her to dress, she put any thing awry, either involuntarily or intentionally. But she always made up for any little crossness of temper with kind words and presents after it was over, and, on that account, the chambermaid was more attached to her than the other servants were. In a word, my aunt was loved by all who knew her; and I, though I knew her last of all, loved her more than all, and was myself the first object of her tenderness and care.

I had a room for myself, with a clean bed, and a chest of drawers filled with clothes and linen. My

aunt and her maidservant fed me and caressed me from morning to night. Every day my aunt took me out to walk along with her, and praised loudly my personal appearance. All her acquaintances and friends caressed me, and made me presents of confections and toys. Three months had elapsed since my change of condition, and I had no remembrance of it. Sometimes I would dream of my former situation; then I would awake with a scream, and fall a crying bitterly, dreading a return of the iron age of my childhood. I would always repeat my frightful dreams to my aunt, who comforted me with the assurance that my misfortunes would never be renewed. At last, I gradually began to forget my former condition; but that is pardonable in the years of childhood. How many grown-up people forget in prosperity what they were before! and, what is worse than that, avoid people who were the means of drawing them out of poverty! I was not like them, at least in that respect, for I adored my aunt.

One day Plaiseereen came very early in the morning, and not at his usual time. Coffee was served up, and my aunt sent for me to come into the room.—“Vanya,” she said, “it is time for you to be learning something; according to my calculation, you must now be at least twelve years old. Semen Semenoveetch has sought out teachers for you. You will have to learn French and German, to play on the piano-forte and dance. Do you wish that?” “Why should not I, aunt, if it is agreeable to you.” “Recollect that, if you learn your lessons, you will be always as well

dressed as you are at present, and have always a good dinner; but, if you learn nothing, you may be again unfortunate." Trembling seized upon me at these words, and I said with a tremulous voice—"I will be very attentive to my lessons, aunt!" "Very well," answered she, and turning to Plaiseereen, added, "I have told you already that he must be provided with a family name;* this day must decide it; consider." Plaiseereen thought a little, walked several times up and down the room, and said, "You told me, Adelaida Petrovna, that you recognized your nephew by his astonishing resemblance to his deceased father, and that your conjectures were confirmed by a scar which remained upon his shoulder from the cauterizing of a wen in his infancy. "Exactly so," replied my aunt. "And, therefore, your nephew, should be called 'Vejeeghen' (the seared); this characteristic appellation will keep up in his memory the fortunate change in his life from that mark, and ————" My aunt did not allow him to finish the sentence. "Excellent, excellent," exclaimed she; "henceforth Vanya shall be called Ivan Ivanoveetch Vejeeghen. Do you hear, Vanya?" "I hear." "Now, what is your name?" "Ivan Ivanoveetch Vejeeghen." "Very well," said my aunt, "but what are you?" "The nephew of Adelaida Petrovna Baritono." "Could not be better,"

* There are two surnames used amongst people not in the very lowest class of society; the patronymic ending in *off* or *veetch*, which is the only surname usual among the peasants, and the family name which generally originates from the profession or some peculiar quality or habit of the first of the family to which it has been applied.

said my aunt. "Now, recollect that your father was a gentleman in an official situation, and that his name was Ivanoff; besides, he amassed for himself a decent fortune, but unfortunately ruined himself and died in the time of your infancy; but your mother, my sister, also a lady by birth, who married for love, died the year after she brought you into the world. As your father left no relations, it is all the same to you, whether you call yourself Ivanoff or Vejeeghen." I held my tongue and listened. "Now, Vanya, go into your own room," said my aunt; "to-morrow your lessons will begin." Plaiseereen, who loved a jest, made a bow to me, adding, "*A revoir*, Ivan Ivanoveetch Vejeeghen; I beg you will love and reverence your godfather." My aunt smiled and said, "I allow you to love him, but I forbid you to follow his example, otherwise you will deserve the appellation of a *mauvais sujet*." This French expression I knew long ago, as Gologordoffsky's and Scotinko's children were so called to their face by their teachers; therefore, as in duty bound, I without hesitation replied—"Don't be afraid, aunt; I shall endeavour not to resemble Semen Semenoveetch."

Next day, the teachers made their appearance. The first, a German, Mr. Biersaufer, an old snuffy fellow, with a pimpled face on which flourished the laurels of Bacchus; another, a young Frenchman, Monsieur Felix, a çidevant journeyman in a pomatum manufactory, who, by teaching beginners, had taught himself to become a teacher and governor. Mr. Schmiernoten, also a German, teacher of music and singing, although he was

well acquainted with the theory of music, played so wretchedly on the piano-forte, and squalled so loudly and unharmoniously, that all in the house stopped their ears whenever he took it into his head to sing or play after a lesson. I learned to dance at a dancing-school kept by a lame theatrical dancer who had broken his leg in performing the part of some prodigy in a *grand ballet*.

My language-masters followed quite opposite methods. When I had learned the letters, the German applied himself to beat into my head the grammar rules ; while the Frenchman, paying little attention to the grammar, fell to work, tooth and nail, and endeavoured to cram me with as many words and phrases as possible. As in our house they jabbered French continually, and almost all the visitors, vying with one another, examined me touching my progress in the French language, I very soon learned to chatter it myself, and completely to understand every thing that was said, to the great delight of my aunt. When I already understood what I read, Monsieur Felix began to teach me the grammar, that is to say, he told me the meaning of genders, substantives, and adjectives ; and taught me how to apply the articles, and conjugate active verbs. In the course of a year, I had already learned to talk French almost as well, and to say the least, almost as boldly as any of our acquaintances ; but in the German language I had scarcely reached the declensions. I played on the piano-forte much better than my master, and sung so agreeably, that, on our musical evenings, I would perform a solo. Dancing

was a pleasure to me ; in the course of a year, I learned not only the waltz and quadrille, but minuet, allemande, matadore, and all the fashionable hops of the day. In the fourteenth year of my age, and after one year's schooling, I had become in the words of my aunt, '*un jeune homme accompli*'—a chatterer, free and easy, in my manners and even forward : all these qualities were called marks of genius. It was proposed in a council of my aunt's friends, to send me to a first-rate boarding-school, in order to make me a *learned man*. Prince Tchvanoff took upon himself to defray the expence of my education. But, as my aunt wished on no account to be separated from me, on my name's day,* when, according to my aunt's computation I had completed my fourteenth year, I was enrolled as a day-boarder in the didactic establishment of Monsieur Lebrilliant, where children of the first Russian families were sent to be educated. I had several books bought for me, got a present of a rich portfolio, and began seriously to apply to my studies, seeing that my pro-

* Christian names are universally given after that of some saint in the Russian calendar, and the day of their patron-saint is in general kept there with greater éclat than birth days are held in this country : visits are paid and presents given by acquaintances and relations, and the person whose name's day is celebrated, gives an entertainment if his or her means will afford it. The police officers, especially, seldom forget to let all the householders in their ward know when their name's day occurs. Among the country people, the priests follow the rules of the church, and give the children the name of the saint who presides over the day of their birth ; but among the other ranks who can afford to pay a suitable fee, they will anticipate or go back to a holiday, in some cases two or three months distant.

gress in the sciences was a source of gratification to my aunt, and of presents to myself.

I had promised my aunt that I should be better than the young Gologordoffskys and Scotinkos ; but, as the same effects are the consequences of the same causes, over-indulgence led me into the very same vices which I had before hated : I acquired a haughty manner, and fancied myself superior to every body. I was refused nothing, and this acted as a whet to my wishes, illustrating a well known law of human nature. The grown-up boys in our boarding-school, (copying the domestic occupations of their parents,) played at cards with one another, treated one another with breakfasts, and he amongst us who could spend most, enjoyed the greatest respect from his companions. When I had not money enough for my diversions, I feigned indispensable wants, not daring to reveal to my aunt what we did by stealth ; asked money for books, paints, compasses and paper, and thus learned to lie and cheat. My aunt and her friend gratified my wishes without contradiction, and thus I grew to regard it as an unpardonable sin in a servant, if he hesitated to execute my orders, and by these means acquired a haughty manner of demeaning myself towards servants, and became arrogant and capricious. With my poor school-fellows I was rude ; with the rich, familiar—reckoning myself richer than the former, and better than the latter. I neither feared nor respected my teachers and governors, because the proprietor of the boarding-school, fearing lest he might lose the patronage of Prince Tchvanoff, and my aunt's presents, flattered me,

looked through his fingers at my romping, and paid no attention to the complaints of the teachers. I thus involuntarily grew exactly like those children who before appeared to me so intolerable. Besides, I lost all inclination to learn, my head being always taken up with something else. But fortunately my uncommon memory and ready comprehension supplied the place of attention: hearing the lessons in the regular routine, and never casting an eye upon them at any other time, I knew better than all the rest, whatever tasks were given out in the boarding-school, with the exception of mathematics. To learn that, fixed application, repetitions and copyings are necessary; and as that was not at all to my taste, I resolutely declared to my aunt, that I had no inclination nor capacity for mathematics. She, after consulting with Plaiseereen and the Abbé Pretatout, withdrew me from the mathematical lessons, and all my progress in this science was confined to arithmetic.

CHAPTER X.

Boarding-school Examination—A Tempter—New friend of my Aunt—Symptoms of first Love—Departure from Moscow.

THE age of child-hood passes away rapidly. I grew up to be a stripling in my aunt's house, learned my lessons, kicked up dusts in the boarding-school, and had not time to observe what was passing at home : therefore I shall say nothing about it. The time approached of the usual show-trial in the boarding-school, and of dismissal from the upper class in which I was one of the best scholars. The oldest of us was not more than seventeen years of age ; but we all thought ourselves qualified to fill the first situations in the empire, and lamented the time which we lost, not in learning, but which might have been spent in serving for an officer's rank.* With impatience we waited for the examination, of which notices had been sent to the parents for two weeks previous. The preparations were begun. Each teacher had so many questions and answers given him, in which he had to drill us every day, and to accustom us, by certain conventional marks, to know what answers to give, in case any of the by-standers should put questions, for which

* In the Russian army no commissions are given till the candidate has served a certain time in the ranks ; unless he has previously held a commission in another service.

ready-made answers were not at hand. For instance, all the buttons on the coat and waist-coat of the teacher of languages, denoted the parts of speech and the grammar rules. All their motions had a particular meaning. The nose of the professor of fortification was equivalent to a bastion, his mouth to the ditch of a fortress, his teeth to palisades, his chin to the glacis, his eyes to the fleches, his neck to a *tete du pont*, &c.—The head of the teacher of geography represented the universe. The crown of his head denoted the zenith, his chin, the nadir ; his cheeks the polar circles, his nose the ecliptic, his skin the first meridian, his mouth the ocean, his eyes the fixed stars, &c. &c. Besides the teachers, the scholars were also taught how to assist their comrades by means of signs. M. Lebrilliant prepared certificates for every scholar, to be presented to their parents, relations, and guardians. A good or bad certificate of behaviour and acquirements did not depend on the progress and morals of the scholars, but on the rank, wealth, liberality and degree of attachment shewn by the parents and relations to the children. He, from whom M. Lebrilliant had the greatest expectations, received the best certificate ; but, as it was not to be supposed that there would be no triflers and idlers, the bad certificates were allotted to those children whose parents were absent, to orphans, for whom their guardians, as usual, cared but little, and to two poor boarders whom Monsieur Lebrilliant educated, out of charity as he said, though perhaps more with a view to get a name for magnanimity and generosity. All the scholars who were to get rewards,

(bought, of course, with their own money), and those who were to receive good certificates, were told beforehand, by way of secret, and instructed to invite as many of their relations and acquaintances as possible. At length, when all the preparations were completed, began the show.

The hall was crowded with visitors, public functionaries, ladies, and people who were on friendly terms with Monsieur Lebrilliant. The exhibition was opened with a speech in the French language, delivered by me with the greatest confidence. This oration was composed by Abbé Pretatout, and corrected and improved by all the teachers of the school, including even the teacher of calligraphy. For the preference shewn to me, my aunt presented Madame Lebrilliant with a piece of silk stuff, and some *arsheens** of lace which she had got in a present from Prince Tchvanoff. The trial of the grown-up scholars went on in a perfectly satisfactory manner—thanks to the conventional signs. Many of the visitors who were friends of our teachers, gave us difficult questions, the answers to which we knew before, and inexperienced parents were astonished at our acquirements. But there were among us some impenetrable blockheads, whom it was impossible to teach their exercise, or to beat into their thick skulls either the ready-made questions and answers, or the conventional signs, and this occasioned some very strange misunderstandings and mistakes. For instance,

* The *arsheen* is the Russian yard, and measures about 28 inches.

the son of a head-secretary* was asked—"What sort of occupation or profession turns over the most ready money in the empire?" In vain the teacher of statistics put his hand into his side-pocket, which, by previous agreement, denoted trade; the youth, by having heard from his parents reflections upon the same subject, and thinking that he was giving a pertinent answer, said—"Law-suits!" The company could not help laughing, and the father of the youth concealed his face with his handkerchief, as if he was wiping off the perspiration. Another scholar, the son of a rich and haughty lawyer was asked, 'What are active verbs in the Russian language?' He held his peace. His father, getting out of humour, said to him: "Vanya, you surely have not forgotten here what you learned before you left home?" Some one whispered into Vanya's ear, and he answered—"Our active verbs are *lgat* and *brat*," (to lie and grasp). This again raised a burst of laughter from all the corners of the room, and the proud lawyer looked blue with vexation. Mr. Lebrilliant, to avoid farther perplexities, took the examination into his own hands. He did the business so neatly, that all answered admirably, to the great satisfaction of the mammas and aunts. Here are some

* The person called the *secretary*, who is always a professional lawyer, in most cases leads the judges by the nose. Nominally his business is confined to the engrossing of the decisions and drawing up the minutes, but suitors are so well aware of his real influence, that prudent people take care to secure his good opinion, cost what it may, when the matter in dispute is worth contending for.

specimens of Monsieur Lebrilliant's pedagogical talents. "How do you call the principal city in Spain?" asked Monsieur Lebrilliant, "Isn't it Madrid?" "Madrid," answered the scholar. "Very well; but on what river does it lie? Isn't it on the Mansanares?" "Madrid lies on the river Mansanares," answered the scholar quickly and loudly. "Very well, very well, sit down." "Now tell me, you Master M. M. is it with justice that the Volga is called the largest river in European Russia?" "The largest river in European Russia is the Volga," answered the scholar in a trice. "Very well, excellent. Tell me master N. N. who was the first Roman emperor, when Augustus took upon himself the first imperial dignity?" "Augustus," answered the scholar. "Very well," said Monsieur Lebrilliant. In this way all the scholars gave satisfactory answers to Monsieur Lebrilliant's questions, and tender-loving parents agreed unanimously, that their children were taught excellently at the boarding school, and, if they fell sometimes into inaccuracies, it was entirely owing to other people not knowing how to examine them with so much tact as the learned Monsieur Lebrilliant.

The examination lasted two hours; after this, the rewards and certificates were distributed by sound of trumpets and cymbals, and we went away with our parents. The gentlemen, that is to say, friends of the proprietor of the boarding-school and of the teachers, who assisted them to examine us on the plan of conventional signs, and the humble domestic friends of the rich parents, remained to dine with Monsieur Lebril-

liant, for which, the day previous, baskets had been sent with wine from several houses. For three successive days there was no teaching in the boarding-school, because the teachers needed repose after their exertions. Although I had already gone through the course of studies pursued in the boarding-school, yet, by the advice of Abbé Pretatout, I was to continue to take lessons till it should be considered what to do with me. I overheard from the other room the reasons given by the Abbé for this measure. "Let Vanya go to the boarding-school," said the Abbé. "It will cost you nothing. You know the prince pays for all. For the sciences he does not want it ; but, if kept at home, he might learn what he should not know.—Youth is full of curiosity and meddling, and our Vanya was always knowing and quick-sighted beyond his years. Do you understand me ? We will soon find some employment for him." "Be it so as you propose," answered my good aunt ; "I am ready to do any thing, from love to him."

As soon as my class companions left the boarding-school, I reckoned myself before all the rest, and entirely left off learning. During school-hours I employed myself in reading books, which we procured from a general acquaintance of the boarding-school, Luke Ivanoveetch Vorovaateen. He was not acquainted with my aunt, and my comrades introduced me to him. Luke Ivanoveetch lived opposite to our boarding-school, and was on friendly terms not only with M. Lebrilliant, but with all the teachers ; and on that account, when the lessons were over, they

permitted the scholars to go to his house, and to remain there sometimes till midnight. Luke Ivanoveetch taught us to play at all the different games of cards, faro and shloss ; * permitted us to smoke tobacco, treated us with wine, punch, and spirits, and entertained us with stories of his love-adventures. He had a small library of prohibited books ; and every thing obscene which fell into his hands, both in prose and verse, was copied into his small collection of manuscripts. Some portfolios were filled with engravings and drawings, which he certainly would never have ventured to shew to any body but to inexperienced youths, and to friends who were as great reprobates as himself. In his conversations with us, he never failed to laugh at all the civil and religious duties of mankind, at the obligation of relative ties, and the respect due to parents ; in a word, at every thing which good people regard as sacred. Luke Ivanoveetch kept a steady eye on our inclinations, gradually excited our passions, inflamed our desires, and unceasingly insisted that the chief end of man is pleasure, and that in aiming at any particular end, the shortest and surest methods are always the best. According to the rules of Mr. Vorovaateen, there was only one duty of children to parents, and that was, to personate in their presence the character which pleased them best. Sincerity towards parents and old people in general, he treated as a fault and a folly. Vorovaateen cloaked his hellish rules under the denomination of *the new philosophy* ; and under the name of the *laws of*

* A species of faro.

nature and *the rights of man*, he sowed the seeds of unbelief in inexperienced minds, and made us think that we were on a footing with the brutes. His ideas pleased us exceedingly, because we found in them every thing which flattered our selfish propensities, and shewed them off in a favourable point of view. We regarded ourselves as philosophers of the eighteenth century, and all who did not think like us and Mr. Vorovaateen, we called barbarians and ignoramuses.—Vorovaateen knew all the scandalous anecdotes of the best families, and by exposing the nakedness of the parents before the eyes of their offspring, he obliterated from their hearts every trace of attachment and respect towards their elders. He lived upon play and all sorts of manœuvring; lent money to the heirs of rich people, gained it back from them at cards, traded in bills, * and things which he bought upon credit in the shops, and acted in the capacity of pimp and general agent for intrigues, both to old and young, men and women.

All the town knew Vorovaateen; and although he did not shew himself in decent families on days when they had company, he was very frequently applied to for advice and assistance by people of rank and fortune.—Luke Ivanoveetch was about forty years of age,

* The bills of the different classes of the nobility and gentry are a common article of speculation among monied people in Moscow not engaged in trade, and are to be bought and sold at all different prices, from ninety-nine $\frac{1}{2}$ cent. discount to five or ten $\frac{1}{2}$ cent. according to the credit of the acceptor: they, in some measure, make up for the want of a stock exchange in that ancient capital.

of a small figure and thin habit of body. His hair was reddish, his face pale, covered with wrinkles and carbuncles, the primary consequences of debauchery. He always winked with his eyes, and this suspicious manner of his was apt to excite an unfavourable impression against him. Vorovaateen boasted that he had already initiated a whole generation in the rules of his new philosophy ; and, in reality, the greatest scapegraces and debauchees in the metropolis had been his friends from their early years. But not one of them escaped from under his wing gratis ; he assisted them to squander their money, and was the first to take advantage of their ruin. Upright people called Vorovaateen *a demon*, young people called him a *jolly fellow*, and inexperienced youth, as already mentioned, esteemed him *a philosopher*. In the journals of the police he was known under the names of a *false player* and a *jobber*.

Luke Ivanoveetch attached himself particularly to me, prophesying that I would be a great philosopher, and attain the highest degree of riches and renown. He never in my presence spoke ill of my aunt, knowing my affection for her ; only he forbade me to tell her any thing about our acquaintance, alleging that he was a personal enemy of prince Tchvanoff and of Plaiseereen, who might give her a bad character of him, and she, from female credulity, might put an end to our intimacy. Vorovaateen, besides, gave me money for play and for my other wants, and called me by no other name than his younger brother. I was a sort of second landlord in his lodgings ; came when-

ever I liked, did whatever I chose, and, although he was not at home, gave orders to his servants. I treated my companions at his expense, and disposed of his property as if it was my own. Is it to be wondered that this behaviour on the part of Vorovaateen made me believe that he loved me merely for my personal qualities? This very idea attached me to him. I even prided myself upon this preference. We had no secrets between us, and, at his request, I told him my adventures, the miseries of my childhood, my meeting with my aunt, and at last shewed him the lucky mark by which she was convinced that I was her nephew. I thought that, at the time of my disclosure, Vorovaateen loved me still more tenderly. He was the first to whom I laid myself open in that respect.

In the mean time, there appeared very frequently among my aunt's visitors, a personage who had occupied an important situation in Petersburg, which having resigned, he had come to live in Moscow, in order to enjoy the *otium cum dignitate* afforded him by a fortune acquired (no matter how) during his long service. Mr. Grabeelen was about fifty years of age, but was lusty and vigorous beyond his years. He was proud, daring in his words and actions, capricious, and by his behaviour frequently brought tears into my aunt's eyes. He made himself completely master of the house, stationed there his own servants, and forbade my aunt to receive any visitors without his permission, except some elderly musicians. Grabeelen would not hear, nor turn about, nor make any

reply, if he was not styled 'your excellency.' Semen Semenoveetch and Abbé Pretatout durst not shew their faces in our house, and prince Tchvanoff was the only man who came on the old footing. My aunt called him her godfather and benefactor, and Grabeelen did not dare to oppose the prince, but, on the contrary, seized the opportunity to establish a close friendship with him. The two old men would spend a great deal of time in talking upon politics : my aunt mean while would slip away to her neighbour's, a female friend, who lived in the other half of the house, where she was sure to find Semen Semenoveetch or some other of her former acquaintances. The affairs of the empire, in which the old men had no longer any participation, would interest their attention to such a degree, that, in the heat of their disputes and arguments, they did not trouble their heads about my aunt's absence. At any rate, from the time of Grabeelen's appearance, every thing was turned topsy-turvy in the house : the musical *soirees* were given up, and in general a sort of monotony reigned in place of the former cheerfulness. I was particularly affected by the change. Grabeelen behaved to me very superciliously, hardly deigned to look upon me, quarrelled me for every immodest word and for every free action, and did not like that, according to my former practice, I should mingle in the conversation. I accordingly shunned his presence, and, under the pretence of occupation at the boarding-school, almost lived with Vorovaateen.

Vorovaateen introduced me at the houses of some

of his acquaintances, where, without farther ceremony, I was invited to dine, sup, and dance. I visited more frequently than others, an intimate female acquaintance of his, who had a pretty daughter. Matrena Ivanovna Shtoseen, a widow of five and thirty, cheerful and volatile, loved the amusements of society, gaiety and card-playing. She had an extensive circle of acquaintances among the clerks in public offices, and the small country-gentry. Her husband, in his lifetime, had held a lucrative office, and after his death, she succeeded to a house and considerable property. Almost every evening, a number of visitors, both gentlemen and ladies, used to assemble at her house, to play at cards and talk about affairs in general. They began with round games, but ended always with faro.—Groonya,* her daughter, who was in her fifteenth year, passed for a beauty. She was of a pensive turn, spent the greater part of her time alone in her own room, reading sentimental romances, and was profoundly versed in the passion of the young Werter and *la nouvelle Eloise*. I had an opportunity of conversing with her very frequently, when her mother superintended the marking at cards or was taken up at faro. I very soon got upon friendly terms with Groonya, and after some disputes upon morals and Philosophy, we agreed to open a correspondence with one another upon sundry philosophical subjects, in order to perfect ourselves in the French language and in wisdom. But wisdom does not love to mingle in the affairs of

* A contraction for Agraphena.

young gentlemen with young ladies. Our philosophical letters soon assumed a tone similar to that of the affectionate Saint Preux and the tender-hearted Julia, and, without knowing the why or the wherefore, we fell desperately in love with one another, and meditated schemes of future bliss. Of course Vorovaateen was my confidant in this love-affair. He circumvented me, inflamed my unexperienced heart with hopes and descriptions of the happiness of being loved, and advised me how to behave towards Groonya.

The elasticity of the young mind gathers fresh strength under difficulties, which older and more experienced people give up all hopes of surmounting. It is only amidst gratifications and indulgences that the young mind loses its strength, and is induced to rest on its leading-strings. But youth, left to its own resources, either fails in the attempt or exerts all its powers of action with uncommon vigour. I have already mentioned that I was regarded from my very childhood as wise beyond my years. My physical constitution was also developed at an extremely early age, in the midst of all the comforts of life ; so that at seventeen, I looked like a youth of twenty. The passions boiled strongly within my breast, a thousand desires agitated my thoughts, but no one passion ruled me exclusively. Sometimes by looking at a grandee of state with his stars and ribbands, or at a general with a splendid uniform, I was filled for some days with ambition, and formed plans for attaining honours. Another time, a brilliant equipage, rich dress and elegant house, extinguished all sparks of ambition, and

begat a desire of wealth. I was buried in contemplating how I might acquire an immense fortune in the shortest space of time. Sometimes the desire of fame domineered in my soul, and then I would devise projects how I would have myself spoken about and written about, in the face of the world. At last the sight of a charming woman going about, arm in arm, with a gentleman, would excite in my breast a wish to be in the same predicament, and I would think of love and marriage. My passions shifted about with the impressions which I received, without leaving any traces of those which they succeeded in my heart. I endeavoured to convince myself that I was in love; to think that I ought to be in love; that it was impossible for me not to be in love. Groonya was beautiful and wise, or at least engaging for me in her conversation, which displayed a considerable acquaintance with French romances. She loved me, and, in my imagination, I added to her real good qualities all possible perfections, and formed in my mind a *beau ideal* which I was pleased to call Groonya. Constraining myself to think of love, I continually mused upon Groonya, and, on all occasions, sought food for my passion. If, in the course of my walks, I heard a peasant, on horseback or in a cart, singing the song, "Otchee, moye otchee, vwee yasneya otchee!" ("Eyes, my eyes, ye bright eyes,") I immediately recalled to my memory the deep azure eyes of my Groonya. If I heard any body saying of a woman; "Ah, what a dear creature!" I would say to myself; "But my Groonya is much dearer!" If it was said of any

one that he was fortunate in his wife, I would think : “ and I shall be much more fortunate with my dear Groonya.” In a word, Groonya was continually in my heart and soul, and I endeavoured to make her equally so in my eyes and mouth : for this purpose, if I was not able to be at her house, I would go to Vorovaateen’s, to whom I could speak boldly of my love.

But, in their fifteenth year, city-bred girls are no longer children : Groonya loved me more in her heart than in her imagination. She taxed her ingenuity in applying to me the names of the heroes, and expressions of tenderness, which made a conspicuous figure in romances. Her heart was fully occupied with me. She would spend the night without sleeping and in tears, if she did not see me for a whole day. When I could not be with her, I was obliged, at least, to pass the window, and make the usual signal with my hand, that I was satisfied with her, and had received her letter. When we were alone, our greatest pleasure consisted in looking one another in the face, squeezing one another’s hands, and repeating a thousand times previously repeated expressions of endearment, which appeared novelties to us, or at least to her. Groonya loved to stroke my chubby, rosy cheeks, with her hand, while I played with her soft arms. It is to be understood, as a matter of course, that I bound myself a thousand times to marry no one but her ; while she took the same obligation on her part towards me. But *when* and *how*, we did not take into consideration. It appeared to us to be a very common

affair, to marry, and live like singing birds. I impatiently waited for permission to give up my visits to the boarding-school, and get rid of the name of school-boy : accordingly I resolved to petition my aunt to that effect.

One day after dinner, when my aunt appeared more cheerful than usual, I proceeded to fulfil my intention. " My dear aunt," said I, " it is of no use to continue paying for me at the boarding-school. I have at my finger-ends every thing which is taught there, and am only losing my time to no purpose, hearing over and over again what I knew long ago. I speak French like a native, understand German very tolerably, dance with ease, and of history, geography, and other sciences I know as much as my masters : besides, by your kindness, I have become a tolerable musician. What more do I want ? I am neither able nor willing to become a teacher, and for a man of the world I am already too learned. You know a great many people of rank and consequence : call them all over in your mind, and tell me which of them knows more than I do ? Would it not be better for me to employ myself at home, in the improvement of my mind by reading, and at the same time seek my fortune in the service, or in any way agreeable to you ? Consider of it, aunt ; and I beg you will not listen to that bear, Grabeelen, who only counsels you to send me to the boarding-school, in order to get rid of my presence." I noticed that my aunt's face grew red at these last words. " Do as you like, Vannushka," said she : " I do not wish you to be under constraint. I myself

see that you are wiser than all my acquaintance." "Therefore to-morrow is to be the last day that I shall go to the boarding-school." "The last day," repeated my aunt; "only you need not mention it to Grabeelen. You can keep to your own apartment when he is with me, or go out." "Excellent!" With grateful feelings I embraced my aunt, and the same day, gave notice to M. Lebrilliant that I was not to continue any longer at his boarding-school. As he had a half-year's advance for my board, and we did not ask the money back, he was quite satisfied, and gave me such a splendid certificate on a large sheet of parchment, that, if credit were to be given to the half of what was written on it, I might be reckoned on a par with the seven sages of Greece. My aunt and I sincerely believed every thing that was written in the certificate: she, because she loved me to distraction, and I, because I had not hitherto met with a man who merited my respect for his knowledge and abilities.

My readers probably have already observed, that no mention has hitherto been made of any one employed in giving me lessons in religion, morality, or the improvement of the heart. To account for this, they must recollect, that I was at first in the very lowest rank of society, from whence I was raised, all at once, to a level with the children of people of rank and wealth. In the first-mentioned condition, the improvement of man's moral nature is never thought of, people being content with having their servants taught the mechanical use of their corporal functions, as dogs

are taught to carry a burden ; in the other condition alluded to, they are entirely taken up with making a boy a man, exactly similar to those who by birth or riches have a right to live in what is called the great world. But, as in the higher circles neither religion nor philosophy is ever talked of, as no attention is paid either to learned people, or the sciences or moral conduct ; the French language, dancing, and a knowledge of the practices of high life, are all that constitute the standard of excellence. For this alone money is paid to the French teachers, and they do no more than what is required of them. I must candidly confess that M. Lebrillant was not in the least to blame during the time that I spent in his boarding-school, for not giving me the smallest idea of the duties of a man and a citizen ; for nobody asked him to do it, and it is not the business of a well-bred person to incumber himself with attending to what nobody asks him. To fulfil one's duty conscientiously, is a practice confined to the middle classes, who in the great world are called *la mauvaise compagnie* ! *

I had scarcely enjoyed a month of liberty, when grief broke in upon my sweet inactivity. One evening, when Mrs. Shtoseen was playing at cards, and I, as usual, sought an opportunity of speaking with Groonya alone, a maid-servant whispered in my ear to go straight into the young lady's bed-room. I found Groonya in tears. She told me that her mother was going with her to Orenburg, in order to succeed to

* *La mauvaise compagnie* answering to this description is very rare in Russia.

some property left by a consin-german of her husband. This respectable cousin was at first Secretary for the salt-department, * and after that superintendant of the market for bartering with the Kirgheez-Tartars. He passed for a very poor man all his life, and had received, on several occasions, pecuniary assistance from government, on account of his insufficient income ; but after his death, when his property was sealed up, † bank-receipts and bills were found for more than half a million of roubles. In his life-time he never heard of or from any of his relations, and indeed Mr. Shtoseen on several occasions kept out of his way, when he wanted assistance : but no sooner was there any scent of this inheritance, than up started some dozens of relations, who, in honour of the memory of the deceased, went to law with one another. The departure of Mrs. Shtoseen was fixed to take place within a week, and her return at an indefinite time. After weeping together, we renewed our bonds of eternal love and fidelity, and agreed to write one another every post, till I should find an opportunity for setting off to Orenburg. I made that promise to Groonya without thinking how I should perform it. Next day, I related every thing to my friend Vorovaateen, who immediately promised to assist me throughout, and even to take me to Orenburg, where, according to

* There are salt-works belonging to the Russian Government not far from Orenburg.

† On the death of any person, the police come and seal up whatever moveable property he leaves ; and these seals are not taken off till it is ascertained who is the legal heir.

his advice, it behoved me to follow up my addresses to Groonya, to marry her, and in quality of heir to the rich Kirgheezeian superintendant, to sue for my share in a court of law, if Mrs. Shtoseen would not give up the inheritance by fair means ; Groonya, according to law, being nearest of kin to her father.

In the meantime, Grabeelen learned somehow that I had left the boarding-school ; and, as he had formerly driven me out of the house to school, so he now fell to work to drive me into the service. I resolved to convert his dislike for me to my own use.

It would be in vain to describe the tears, sighs, sobbings, and faintings, at parting with Groonya. These are disagreeable affairs known to every body. She had scarcely set off for Orenburg, when I began to look out for means to hasten after her. Vorovaateen condoled with me amidst my grief, and resolved immediately to conduct me to my beloved, and even advised me to set off without my aunt's permission. But I would not agree to that, and in a month after Groonya's departure, I succeeded in getting my aunt's permission by the following contrivance.

“ Aunt !” said I to her, “ I have been promised a good situation in the Mint at Moscow : but, as some experience is necessary in the first place, to qualify me for it, one of my acquaintances, who serves in the mining department, wishes to take me with him to Orenburg. He will not be there for more than four months, for the revision of business, and I will be with him in the capacity of letter-writer. On my return to Moscow, I shall have a fair claim for a

situation in the public service, and my protector vouches for my immediate reception into the service, upon his representation, and as a reward for my previous labours. Give me your consent, aunt ! Is it not better that I should be obliged to myself and my own labour for my fortune, than to your friends, who, I suspect, do not love me over much ? You know that, without an officer's rank, I cannot appear in good company. It was long before my aunt would consent to part with me ; but when I told Mr. Grabeelen this story, which was invented by Vorovaateen, he obliged my aunt to let me go. One of Vorovaateen's friends undertook to play the part of the officer of the mining-department at my aunt's house, and gave her the fullest assurance that he would take me under his special protection, promising at the same time all possible advantages in the service. My aunt equipped me for the road, and filled my pocket-book pretty handsomely. Even Grabeelen made me a present of fifty silver roubles. The good old gentleman, prince Tchvanoff, who had never broken off from his old practice of visiting my aunt daily, also gave me money, and a letter of recommendation to the Governor. After bidding adieu to my aunt, I seated myself in the carriage with Vorovaateen's friend, and he himself waited us beyond the barrier. I was just like a man in a fever, from the ebullition of opposite feelings—love to my aunt, commiseration and grief that I was leaving her, on the one hand ; and on the other, the joyful hope of meeting again with Groonya, of marrying her, and the delightful idea of acquiring wealth and envy.

The scattering of the attention by the variety of objects on the road, quieted my spirits a little, but involuntarily I always thought more of my aunt than of Groonya.

CHAPTER XI.

I get better acquainted with Vorovaateen's character—Conversation overheard—Presentiments—A provincial dealer in justice.

“How much money have you?” said Vorovaateen to me at the first stage. “A hundred and fifty silver roubles.” “A goodly capital,” answered Vorovaa-teen. “There are few at your time of life that have so much money in their hands: you are richer than I, Vanya. Justice requires that you should pay the half of the travelling expences.” “I never intended otherwise,” replied I, “and resolved to settle with you on our arrival at the place.” “It is all the same,” said Vorovaateen; “but, as you are not yet accustomed to handle money, give it to my care.” “I think it lies quite safe in my own portmanteau.” “It will be better in my trunk, which has a lock to it,” returned Vorovaateen. “Just as you please,” said I, and immediately gave him the money, retaining only a few silver roubles for my own petty expences. For some stages, Vorovaateen was in a silent and thoughtful mood, and at last he renewed the conversation in a very grave and cold tone of voice. “Is it possible that your aunt should never have said anything to you about your father?” asked Vorovaateen, darting at me a penetrating look. “Nothing but what I told you.” “It is strange, very strange,” retorted

Vorovaateen. "I do not see the smallest strangeness," said I. "If there had been any thing particularly curious in my late father's life, my aunt would certainly have told me of it. But, perhaps, you know something?" added I, looking again at Vorovaateen: "you will oblige me greatly, if you can tell me any thing on that head." "How should I know?" answered Vorovaateen dryly. "If it gives you so little concern, why that scepticism?" "You do not know yet all the turnings and windings of the female character," said Vorovaateen. "When you suffer for your inexperience, your faith in their good qualities will not be so strong." "I have not the smallest cause for not putting confidence in my aunt, who loves me as if I were her own son, has done every thing in her power for me, and is ready to sacrifice every thing on my account." "That is the very thing," replied Vorovaateen, "which makes it difficult to believe that your aunt, who loves you so well, never said any thing to you about your father's condition, about your future hopes, and so forth." "Although you have given me many lectures in praise of insincerity, I have not yet learned implicitly to follow your instructions," said I, with some chagrin. "I repeat what I have already said, that with regard to my father's condition and origin, my aunt told me every thing which she deemed necessary; his adventures, I suppose, were not interesting, as she said nothing about them. For the rest, on my return to Moscow, I shall question her more particularly upon that head, which, till this moment, I conceived to be of little importance." "It is too

late now," said Vorovaateen, with a constrained smile. "Why should it be too late," asked I. Vorovaateen all at once got into a strange fit of laughing, and said, "We shall see by and by!" He turned the attention to other subjects, and endeavoured to amuse me; but grief had got possession of my heart, and I remained sad and silent. From henceforth my confidence in Vorovaateen ceased, and I began to dread his ill-offices with Groonya, and to fear that he might make her acquainted with my previous condition. However, he began to caress me in his former manner, and to puff me up with hopes on the score of marriage and fortune.

We stopped to pass the night in the post-house of a small town. Towards evening there arrived in a post-cart a middle-aged man, who also stopped there for the night. I observed from the window, that Vorovaateen accosted the new comer in a familiar tone, but he, on his part, behaved towards Vorovaateen with a distant respect, and did not put on his cap till he told him to be covered. They stepped aside to the gable of the house, against a wall where there was no window, and entered into conversation together; but as the wind happened to blow from that side, by stepping into the innermost room,* I overheard part of their discourse. "You have been in too great a hurry, Paphnooteetch," said Vorovaateen; "you should have waited till I had lived some time in the place, and thought upon the means. You know we cannot tie a stone about his neck, and throw him into the water without

* The rooms in Russian houses open into one another.

more ado." "It is not my business to contrive how to get him off your hands," replied the new-comer; "but the Countess gave me no rest, and obliged me to go, whether I would or not. It is said that the Count is on his return to Moscow." * * * * On this, the wind blew open the gate, and from the creaking and rapping, I did not hear the end of the sentence. "Am I to blame that the Countess does not wish to have him dispatched? Whenever conscience interferes in a business," * * * * A carter who was in the court-yard, bawled out loudly to his comrade, and again I did not hear the end of Vorovaateen's speech. After that, the stranger said, "I was ordered to remain with you till the end of the business, to assist you throughout, and after it is finished, to return to the Countess, to her country seat near Moscow, at" * * * * At these words, Vorovaateen and the stranger went out at the gate, and I remained at the window in a state of stupefaction and uneasiness on account of what I had heard. There could be no doubt but that Vorovaateen was brewing some mischief, and I, knowing the looseness of his principles, was convinced, that neither the fear of God nor the voice of conscience would keep him from the commission of crime. But who could that unfortunate victim be, for whose destruction this plot was contrived? Who could that Countess be, who impatiently waited for the news of her fellow-creature's misfortune? Who, that Count? Who, the new-comer? That dreadful secret, boding destruction to some one, made me shudder. I felt that it would be to no purpose to in-

quire of Vorovaateen, and to tell him that I had overheard part of his discourse with the unknown stranger. Besides, I dreaded, lest by discovering his intentions, I might draw down upon myself his anger and even vengeance ; so I resolved to be silent, to have all my eyes about me, and, if it should be possible, to prevent the execution of this wicked project. Tormented with these thoughts, I paced up and down the room, agitated with violent emotions. My heart beat strongly, my head felt heavy, my mouth was dry. I went into the post-master's sitting room, in order to get a draught of water, and by chance saw the unknown stranger's *podoroajney*. From it I learned, that Vorovaateen's confederate was a *meshtchaneen* * of Kolomna, called Prokhor Nojoff, and that he was travelling from Moscow to Orenburg.

To divert my attention, I went to take a walk through the town. But in our country-towns there are few attractions for a traveller. All that I saw from one end of the town to the other, as I walked along the streets, was—ragged boys, hungry dogs, horned cattle and fowls, cheek by jowl, grubbing amongst the dirt in the middle of the street ; old women with their arms akimbo standing at the gates of log-houses, talking with their neighbours, or scolding one another ; grown-up men standing in crowds before the cabarets where the old men were seated ; and youths pacing to and fro before windows, from which now and then some sweet little female visages would peep

* The lowest class of freemen, for which there is no corresponding term in English ; the French *bourgeois* is nearest to it.

out. In some places the mourners' songs were heard ; and to complete the picture, in two places, peaceable citizens were pulling each other by the hair in a circle of good neighbours and friends, while some respected fathers of families, inebriated with the gifts of the hyperborean Bacchus, joined arm in arm with some dozens of boys, and were singing a dancing song. It was the evening of a holiday.

The town was nothing but a large square space of ground surrounded with a broken railing ; three-fourths of the enclosed ground were occupied as pasture.— A broad street, or properly speaking, the post-road, went through the middle of this enclosure. On both sides of this road, across the gutters, were built small wooden houses and huts. On the right and left were some lanes, with huts half sunk in the ground, and large empty spaces of land inclosed with broken rails and pailings. In the centre of the town was a square, in which was erected a brick church, and a half-ruined structure of the same materials, which had at one time been destined for the government buildings. On paper this town occupied a great deal of space, and all the streets marked out in nature by the digging away of earth and the remains of gutters, formed a beautiful perspective on the plan. It was only a pity that heaps of dung and rubbish of all sorts, thrown together confusedly, occupied the place of the greater part of the houses so finely planned by the government architects. My readers, * in fine, have seen many such towns ;

* *i. e.* Russian Readers.

but as their names exist on maps and plans, kept in the public archives, and as the places for the construction of the houses are marked out, and even the ornaments contrived, it would appear that the half of the business was already done. For the rest, no one is to blame : man proposes and God disposes ! So it is as impossible to make a town populous without local advantages, as it is to fix the course of exchange.

On returning to the post-house, I found Vorovaateen in a very merry mood. He was waiting me to supper, and, in the meantime, while he treated the post-master with spirits, was asking him questions concerning the ways of living of all the neighbouring gentry, concerning the provincial magistrates, and all the news of the district. This was a practice of Vorovaateen's at every stage ; and by comparing the information of the post-masters with the evidence of the postillions and the keepers of the cabarets and baiting-houses on the road, he made his own deductions, and noted them down in his memorandum-book. When I one day inquired of him the reason for this curiosity, Vorovaateen coolly replied—" How can we know before hand, with whom we may have to do in the course of our life ? But when one knows many people's habits of thinking and acting, occasions may happen when this knowledge may be of service. I regard men as apothecaries' drugs, the peculiarities of which must be known in order to make use of them. In human intercourse as well as in the economy of inanimate nature nothing falls to the ground, if a wise man knows how to employ men's tempers and passions. The common

articles of diet in the hands of a skilful man may serve for the cure of diseases, and the greatest rogue or fool may also be sometimes of service to a wise man in his affairs." Vorovaateen, on telling me this, ended with his usual smile, adding—"Write down that psychological lesson in your calendar, Vanya. It is one of the principal rules of my philosophical school." Before this, I would have taken it up as a jest, but after the conversation which I had overheard, Vorovaateen's avowals made a disagreeable impression upon me ; now that I knew they might have some fatal object in view.

There are people who think that it is possible to drown grief in liquor. I never experienced that, in the course of my life. For the first time, I attempted to eat and drink against my will, but the wine went down like gall, and the meat seemed to be tasteless, and heavy as a stone. The penetrating Vorovaateen perceived that I had lost my spirits, but did not guess the cause. "You appear to be angry with me, Vejeeghen?" said he. I held my peace. "It is not surely my questions about your father which have produced such an effect upon you?" added he. "Your questions were nothing, but your distrust of my word was very unpleasant to me," answered I. "Forgive me then, my dear fellow!" exclaimed Vorovaateen, embracing me ; "believe me that my object was merely love to you. I heard a report in Moscow, as if your father had left some property behind him, and as if your aunt had appropriated it to herself, and God knows what else ; and I merely wished to find out whether you knew any thing of it." "In such a case, why did not you

communicate your doubts to me directly, in place of beating about the bush? After revolving the matter well in my mind, I am sensible myself that there has been much which I cannot comprehend during my short existence. Can there be any thing stranger, for instance, than for the son of a gentleman to be thrown away, like a kitten, at the mercy of fate, on Gologordoffsky's property, and that no one should have sought after him, or troubled themselves about him, till the accidental meeting with his aunt? But how that could be done to deprive me of my inheritance, I cannot believe, after receiving so many proofs of affection from my aunt. She is ready to give up not only all that she possesses, but even her life for me, and if her advantage consisted in my not knowing my relations, she would never have owned me." "You argue like a book," returned Vorovaateen; "but I have experienced so much in my life-time, that I am accustomed to believe nothing but what is bad." "I pity you," said I, "and pray to God, that an epoch of such bitter experience may be far from me." "You must agree however," added Vorovaateen, "that it is very astonishing, I may rather say incomprehensible, that your aunt should recognize you in the shop, without having seen you since your infancy!" "I do not dispute but that may appear to you astonishing, merely because I never explained to you all the circumstances of the case. My aunt has two very striking likenesses of my father; one of them painted in his childhood, when he was about the same time of life as I was when she met me in the shop; the other in the twenty-fifth

year of his age, when he was married to my deceased mother. I have seen these portraits, and declare that it would not be easy to find in the whole world so striking a resemblance as there is between me and my father ; while here even two drops of water are not alike. My aunt says, that, besides this, my voice, my gait, my smile, and all my movements, become from day to day more like my father's, and that whoever has seen my father once in his life, either in his youth or on the picture, at the first glance will see that I am his son. And so you see that it was quite natural for my aunt, who keeps the two miniatures always in her toilette, and looks at them every day, to be struck at first sight with my resemblance to my father, and knowing the mark which was upon me, to be convinced that I was exactly her nephew. My own carelessness and indifference is more to be wondered at, that it never should come into my head to question my aunt about my parents." Vorovaateen heard me attentively, looked me full in the face, and became absorbed in thought. At last he rose from the table and said—" We have spoken enough about that : you have sufficiently explained it. It is now time to go to sleep."

It was long before I could shut my eyes. For the first time I began to repent that I had deceived my aunt, that I had thoughtlessly taken it into my head to fall in love with Groonya, that I had set off for a distant place in quest of love-adventures, and had connected myself with an unprincipled man. Reason may be compared to the sun, and passion to a conflagration.

gration. A man who should be in a house surrounded with flames and filled with smoke, does not see the sun. But when the fire abates, then is the re-appearance of the luminary of day hailed as the harbinger of safety and consolation. Reason spoke out within me, and I felt that the steps which I had taken would bring me into some unpleasant dilemma, particularly in Vorovaateen's company. I then resolved to embrace the first opportunity of returning to Moscow, to enter into the service, to be more cautious in the choice of my acquaintances, never more to fall in love, and decidedly to disengage myself from Vorovaateen. It is thus that in adversity we form wise projects, which are forgotten as soon as the calamity or danger is passed.

I am not superstitious, but some prejudices, if they deserve that name, have taken strong root within me, and neither age nor experience, nor reason, can loosen them. The chief of them are, a belief in presentiments and in physiognomy. This day was the first in my life, in which I began to give credit to these presentiments as they are called. I shall here describe how I always felt when any misfortune threatened me. My heart beat more strongly than usual, and ached as if there was a wound in it: the circulation of my blood was interrupted, and, on reaching the heart, occasioned an unpleasant feeling. All the miseries which I had seen and experienced in my life recurred to my imagination, and were grouped together in a dismal picture of the future. In that picture I always drew myself in the most unfortunate point of view. My sleep was restless, and disturbed with the most

frightful dreams. Bodily weakness attended this prostration of spirits, and every time that I was looked in the face or asked any question, some suspicion was excited in my mind : every noise or loud bawling, every appearance of any stranger who was unexpected, conjured up a crowd of fears within me. People who were nearest to my heart in love and friendship, whom I had never doubted, became then intolerable to me. On the occurrence of every paroxysm, I expected the stroke of fate like a doomed malefactor ; and I confess, it rarely happened that after such a condition of mind, I did not fall into some misfortune, or at least meet with something disagreeable. With regard to physiognomy, I took my first lesson in Vorovaateen's features, which from that day I began to study with the greatest attention, to weigh all his words and actions, and observe the corresponding changes in his countenance. From that time forward, I could never refrain from judging people from the impression excited in my mind at the first interview. I afterwards read the compositions of Lavater and Delaporta on physiognomy, but always maintain my own system, and form my judgment not from the lines of the countenance, but, so to say, from the play of the physiognomy and the *accueil* of the individual. If a man looks at me through his eye-lashes, or does not look me fair in the face when he speaks ; if he minces his words through his teeth, and studiously composes his speech during the conversation ; if he discourses with me in questions, always asking my opinion, implicitly agrees with me, or only contradicts me in order to

draw out a fuller explanation from me ; I declare, I would not trust such a man. An artificial smile and a constrained laugh serve me for evidences of insincerity. Grimaces made involuntarily with the mouth, a continual moving of the lips, and biting them, are with me bad omens. An unequal gait in which a certain sort of foxish turns are visible, a wrenching of the whole body upon one centre, or crouching similar to that of a cat before a mouse, and a stretching of the head forward like a serpent preparing to throw itself upon its prey, are in my eyes infallible marks of a bad man. A loud manifestation of joy, and greeting of every acquaintance on meeting, appear to me very suspicious. I shall conclude my short digression, by declaring that I was sometimes under a mistake in my presentiments, but never made any in physiognomy. There are many of my physiognomical observations which I do not describe now : my readers may see them afterwards in the portraits of many of the persons whom I met with in the course of my life. With regard to presentiments, I ought to mention that they always occurred with me after some transgression or rash action, when I might expect deserved or undeserved enmity on the part of my enemies. It was not a cause but a consequence ; not a forwarning genius like that of Socrates, but a foretelling one like that of Brutus. In short, whoever has to do with human selfishness and passions, must very frequently expect calamities, although he has done nothing bad, even though on the contrary, he may have merited praise and reward. This is the way of

the world: he who does no mischief himself, must have his trials, and must suffer from the wickedness of others. What constitutes the difference between a good and a bad man in this case, is, that a good man amidst the greatest misfortunes, finds consolation in his own conscience, and in the opinions of honest people, while a bad man has neither haven nor hope in that world where the strong cannot oppress the weak.— But to return to the thread of my story.

Not knowing how to disguise my feelings, I could not look cheerful, but in order to avert all suspicion, I told Vorovaateen that I was unwell. I do not know whether he believed me, but he redoubled his caresses and attention, and behaved towards me with all the tenderness of a father, which in some measure reconciled me to him. To give me time to recruit my health, he stopped for some days in a small *district-town* which lay in a beautiful situation on the banks of the Volga. Vorovaateen had here an old friend who held the office of Sheriff,* (capitan-eespravneek,) to whom he opened his mind freely. In their company I heard things of which I had no idea before. As they, at that time, made a strong im-

* The office of Capitan Eespravneek, chief district or county-magistrate, corresponds more with that of a Scotch Sheriff than of an English one. The office of Sheriff in England comprehends both that of Sheriff and Convener of the county in Scotland, which are also distinct offices in Russia. The convener of the county goes under the name of *Dvorayusky Predvodetl* in Russian. Both offices are elective and triennial, the landholders have the appointment, but the crown-advocate must sanction the election before it is final.

pression upon me, I shall communicate some of the particulars to my readers.

Sava Saveetch was reckoned one of the cleverest Sheriffs in the whole province. He was of a full figure, and, from having served some time in the police-dragoons, still retained his military attitudes and manner, kept himself always as straight as a rush, and in turning, made a rapid *face-about* with his whole body. Years and the fumes of his potations had weakened the roots of his hair, so that he had lost it almost entirely, except some tufts on his whiskers and chin. His long nose and the extremities of his meagre face were covered with livid carbuncles: from under his bushy, hoary eyebrows, glared a pair of small, grey, cattish eyes. He always went about in his official uniform surtout, and wore in his waist a cossack *porte-epée*. He never put on his sword but when he went upon any official business; his usual weapon was a cossack whip, with a leaden bullet plaited into the end of it. His head was generally covered with a stiff-crowned leathern cap, which added to his military appearance. His voice was like the growling of a bear. His writing-department was managed by an old clerk who spent three fourths of his time with his leg tethered to a writing-table.* In addition to this, by Sava Saveetch's orders, his boots were taken off, to prevent him from decamping to the cabaret. But the supple clerk found the road to the

* In Russia, desks are seldom used in public offices: in their place they have long tables generally covered with red cloth.

bottle without rising from his chair. Some of his cronies among the understrappers would fetch him *rodky* in apothecaries' phials, several doses of which he would dispatch every hour, from the time that Sava Saveetch had, in quest of his bottles and cans, ransacked the stove, chimney, and even behind the casks and tubs. On holidays only he had liberty to get drunk, and then he was usually brought home at night, as stiff as a stock, laid in the lock-up room, and water poured upon him. In his journeys through the district, Phomeetch (this was his name) had also full permission to drink a settling bowlful, but only after he had finished his business ; for after his drinking bouts, his hand shook so as to render him unfit for work. Sava Saveetch called Phomeetch a golden man, and his inclination to drunkenness he attributed to his uncommon talents, which, in the opinion of old-fashioned people, cannot flourish unless they are moistened with spiritual dew. According to this maxim, Sava Saveetch was himself a genius : however to give him his due, Sava Saveetch was thoroughly versed in business, particularly in conducting examinations,* following up proofs, and general investigations ; only he did not know how to put his thoughts on paper so easily as he could pour ardent spirits down his throat ; could not pick out for himself in both capitals such a pair of spectacles as would enable him to read hasty-written papers even by syllables, the same as if they

* The sort of questioning here alluded to, is used in a fuller sense than the English word expresses, corresponding more with a synonymous term in Latin.

were printed, and owing to his multiplicity of business, did not recollect the dates of the Ukazes.* In this Phomeetch was his mentor. The inhabitants of the district, as a tribute of justice to Sava Saveetch, called him the *grey wolf*, and his faithful coadjutor Phomeetch was called the *trap*. The sheriff came to spend the evening with us, and when the tea-urn was brought in, he wetted his throat with punch made with Kizlarsky brandy, † and shewed a disposition to open his mind to us. He began in his usual way with his favourite exclamation : “ Bad times ! Bad times ! Education—legislation ! *but no MONEY ! There’s the rub !* ” ‡ “ Have done with your complaints upon the times, Sava Saveetch : ” returned Vorovaateen. “ Do you think I don’t know that the government-berths pay well : the devil himself could not keep you sitting here, if you did not make a livelihood of it. ” “ All very fine, but what would you have me to do with myself ? ” said the sheriff with an air of chagrin. “ We have nothing to live upon but our former savings ; || for all the jobs which we have now-a-days will not keep us in pocket-money. Consider that we have to

* The ukazes are the same to Russia as acts of Parliament are to England, and are the only written laws.

† Brandy made at Kizlar, a town on the Terek which runs into the Caspian sea.

‡ It is difficult to translate this passage into English with the same point as it has in the original. The word *legislation* is here inserted for *iustitia* which, in Russian, does not mean literally *justice*, but the juridical department of the state.

|| The salary attached to offices such as these is a mere trifle, unless the landholders subscribe among themselves to augment it ; a thing which rarely happens.

feed the good folks in the government-town as children have to feed their old daddy. What signifies my having nine thousand two hundred and eighteen souls, if these souls are in an empty body !” “ How !” exclaimed I : “ you have nine thousand two hundred and eighteen souls, and you complain of your poverty !” The sheriff smiled and replied : “ These souls, brother, please to observe, are not mine but the emperor’s, lying under my management ; but he who milks the cow has a right to drink milk, and it cannot be otherwise, but when the emperor has his fill, there must be some scrapings left by *accidences*,* as it is called : but now, bad times ! bad times ! education—legislation ! *but no MONEY ! there’s* the rub ! Something, it is true, is to be made if there should be a hue and cry after deserters and vagabonds in our district, but unfortunately that is a rare occurrence ; and it is difficult to trace them on any person’s property. It is easy to see that the day of judgment is nigh at hand ! for theft is become rare, and murders are scarcely heard of. It is changed times for our brethren the lawyers, whose purses now are in a galloping consumption ! No business, no livelihood. In the meantime they write us from the higher courts ; aye, they writes us, that prisons were not made for nightingales ; that coats cannot be stitched with compliments, and the like. Misery, nothing but misery ! On all sides we are invaded by what is called the march of intellect : they have got a substitute for law-

* Extra-dues, extra-fees, and some sorts of fines go under the name of *accidentia* or *accidence*, in the government offices.

yers in the shape of books which they can carry in their pockets : decent people like us are now a standing jest and laughing-stock in the two capitals, and that not only on the stage, but in the newspapers ; and for what ? Why, because forsooth, we, poor devils, want to eat dry bread for our labour. Even our country gentry are grown wise now-a-days. They are not content with the theory, but they must try their hands at the practice of law, and hardly any mischief happens, but off they post direct to the higher provincial courts, and even to head-quarters. It is better, say they, to feed the wolf than the wolf's whelps. It is true I tease them properly, and handle them with iron gloves. If I find but one deserter in the district, I make him confess that he has been harboured by all the rich proprietors and even peasants, (their masters being answerable,) and immediately I turn the whole district upside down. If a dead body should chance to be found, I toss it about to thirty different places, in order to implicate every body. A stolen horse I trace on paper, in one night, to twenty different stables. But all that is sad fagging, a hard-earned kopeek ! drive about, run about, here and there, write, examine, cross-examine, and knock about like a fish among the ice, a hundred times in one place, fifty times in another, and ten times in a third ! Bad times, brother ! Education—legislation !” Sava Saveetch here washed down his grief, and knocking his glass upon the table, ceased to give utterance to his thoughts. Vorovaateen was pleased with his friend's openness, and endeavoured to renew the conversation. “ But the fairs, Sava

Saveetch, and passports, and prosecutions for government-debts, and private debts, the registering of property, rich guardianships, and besides that, the repairing of the roads, conveying of government-stores, &c. &c.?" "The devil has skimmed off the cream of all this," angrily replied Sava Saveetch. "Few gamblers come to the fairs, and they who do come are as poor as church-mice, and have not the wherewithal to pay the usual fees for permission to fleece the country-gentry, with whom it is now the fashion to go to one of the two capitals to be ruined. There is little to be got from passports: little work in the capitals: trade goes on badly, and few peasants leave the district in quest of work, either for themselves or their horses. It is true that we are paid well for our trouble in prosecuting government-defaulters and private debtors; but the orders are very strict now, and the governors and procureurs bear hard on our fraternity if we lose sight of the government-interests. Of private business not a word. In my opinion, though debts were as common as dung, they would rather let them stand over, than put the business into our hands. It is an age since we have had a prosecution for debt, or any thing to register or copy: the provincial and district-courts correspond with one another in a friendly manner, and let the money-lender read, if he please, the regulations respecting prosecutions for debt, and amuse himself with the fair and legible hands of the clerks of the court. That is an object, thank God, which they leave as it is, without picking any holes. The roads, brother, and conveyance of stores are mere

trifles ! For it is only the post-roads which we repair, and them only when any important personage is about to travel that way : as for the other roads, though the devil himself break his neck, that is not our business ! The troops are now quartered on the frontiers, so that loads are scarce. With regard to guardianships, you are mistaken, my friend, in assigning us a revenue from that source. To be sure, every body may make something by the property of a ward, if he gets it into his hands ; but now the gentry keep these sweet morsels to themselves, and can manage the business in as masterly a style as any of us. If any person is placed under our inspection for bad management ; in a case like that, a rat might die of hunger on such an estate. No, brother, bad times, bad times ! Education—legislation ! *but no MONEY ! there's the rub !*” “ No, Sava Saveetch !” said Vorovaateen : “ things are not changed so much as you would make us believe : the difference is only in this, that you must now do every thing under the rose : there was a time when you laid hold of your booty as an experienced marksman does the game which he has brought down ; but now—” “ But now,” said the sheriff, “ we must have all our eyes about us : honesty is the order of the day,” added he, and again repeated his favourite expression : “ Bad times, bad times ! Education—legislation ! *but no MONEY ! there's the rub !*” Vorovaateen went out of the room, and the sheriff addressed himself to me : “ You are, I understand, a relation of Mr. Vorovaateen ?” “ Yes, Sir.” “ You have not yet entered the service ?” “ No.”

“ It is time, Sir ; high time ; especially if you think of entering the civil service. The grammar of the law, Sir, is an ocean ! You will not drink it all, but you must do what you can at the water’s edge. To speak the truth, the only people who understand the business are those who have begun at the lowest gradations. I advise you to lose no time.” Meanwhile, Vorovaateen returned into the room, and the talkative sheriff, observing that his friend had put on a taciturn and serious air, began on his part to torment him with questions. I let them go on with their conversation about their common acquaintances without attending to the particulars, but a topic at length occurred which aroused me. “ I say, friend : I believe you are in my debt,” said the sheriff to Vorovaateen. “ For what ?” asked Vorovaateen. “ How ! You surely have not forgotten, that, in virtue of your letter, I allowed the *Meshtchaneen*, Nojoff, to escape from prison, who was accused of having run away from Siberia to which he had been banished ? You sent only three hundred roubles, and promised me as much more : in the meantime Nojoff stalks about at liberty, and I have not so much as heard the clink of your money. Aha, brother ! that is not acting like a man of honour.” “ My dear Sava Saveetch,” said Vorovaateen, “ is it for us to reckon up trifles like that ? You did a good action. Nojoff was unjustly sentenced, and I, from mere humanity, sacrificed my own money for his deliverance. I thought that on his return to Moscow he would repay me, and give me still more for you ; but he fell ill in the course of a month after, and died

from the effects of fear, a victim to human malice.” “That is not exactly gospel,” said the sheriff coolly. “Nojoff has, since that time, been long known to the police for various offences ; he is still a public character, and I learned lately that some of our merchants had seen him in Moscow last winter. No, friend, that will not do : I must have the money. Perhaps you don’t know that I had myself a narrow escape, owing to that damn’d affair : had to encounter two examinations, three reprimands, and, in addition to all the expences, had a fine to pay. And after all, I would not have got off as I did, if the Procureur’s lady, thank God, had not taken a fancy to my new Moscow-made sledge.” “Very well, very well ; we shall make it up with you,” said Vorovaateen : “but go to bed now, for my head aches.” Sava Saveetch made a wry face, but, to console himself, emptied the bottle and went home. We immediately lay down ;* but I could not sleep the whole night for thinking of Vorovaateen’s connection with such an infamous villain as Nojoff. At break of day, when I fell asleep, a shocking dream represented to me Nojoff in the act of cutting off my head with an axe. I screamed out, leaped out of bed as if the dream was a reality, and awakened Vorovaateen. He was frightened, and concluded from my restless sleep, that I was in a fever. He

* There are no bed-rooms in the houses upon the road, but if the traveller should have a bed or pillow with him, he gets it spread out at night on the floor of the sitting-room ; if he have no bed, he can generally find either a sofa or a piece of felt to stretch himself out upon for the night, at least in the post-houses.

undertook to cure me, and would force me to drink some sort of tincture : I refused to follow his prescription, and he desisted from taking any farther charge of my health.

After this, in order to escape from the importunities of his friend, the Sheriff, he resolved to leave the town immediately. On learning that Sava Saveetch had gone out some distance upon business, for a few hours, he sent for horses, and before mid-day, we posted for Orenburg.

CHAPTER XII.

The Freedman—Lunatic—Love's labour lost.

WE arrived at Orenburg at about ten o'clock in the morning, and put up in the suburbs, at the house of the *Meshtchaneen*, Ivan Karpoff, who kept a sort of *Postoyaalee dror* * for acquaintances and people recommended to him. We were shewn into two clean rooms hung with coloured paper, while Vorovaateen's servant, a species of automaton, or machine for taking off boots and brushing clothes, was lodged opposite, in the landlord's apartments. Vorovaateen, after changing his clothes, immediately went into the city, saying that he would return late in the evening, and advised me to dine at home and rest after the journey. Being left alone, I called upon the landlord, in order to learn, in the course of conversation, something of Matrena Ivanovna Shtoseen, and her daughter my dear Groonya, on whose account the journey had been undertaken. Our landlord was a man about fifty years of age, good-looking, tall, broad-shouldered and ruddy-faced, who might have stood as a model for a Hercules. He was of a cheerful and talkative temperament, as full-blooded and lively people generally are. On my asking him the question whether he was a native of

* A place of 'entertainment for men and horses.'

the place or a settler, he related his history in a few words. "I was born, Sir, in the neighbourhood of Moscow, and was a serf of Generálsha* Volokeeten, a rich widow who possessed a great deal of landed property. They say that I was not ugly in my younger days ; this was the source of all my misfortunes, which, by the Lord's mercy, have had a happy termination. The Generálsha coming one summer to our village, saw me at work, and immediately took me into her household. I was then sixteen years of age and my mother's only son. My hair they cropped in the German fashion, dressed me in a laced coat, and put me under the tuition of an old footman and the housekeeper, to be initiated into the mysteries of the service. With tears I exchanged my sheep-skin coat for an embroidered livery. Household servants always appeared to me to be tied-up dogs, and I never envied their condition. In other respects, I lived very well in the manor-house. The lady used to caress me, pat my cheeks, and stroke my head, and even send me dainties from her table. The maid-servants looked kindly upon me, and even the house-steward behaved towards me as if I was a nobleman's son. I did not understand the meaning of all these marks of kindness and distinction, till the old housekeeper, under whose orders I was, gave me to understand that I would soon be called to fill an office not at all to my mind. This duty consisted in being always about the lady, and this appeared to me to be more terrible than the

* The title of a General's wife.

king of terrors. An icy chill ran through my veins at these tidings. A single look at the lady made me shudder from top to toe ! Figure to yourself a short, thick, fifty-year-old goody, with her face smeared all over with white and red paint, like a horse-carpet, with goats' eyes and red hair mixed with grey ; who, in place of teeth, clattered a parcel of loose yellow bones in her mouth. Her voice was like the creaking of an ungreased cart, and she was continually scolding or screaming at the servants, or caressing and calling to her lapdogs. Having heard the story of Baba (Goody) Eega,* it appeared to me that she could have been neither better nor worse than my Generálsha. The housekeeper let me know that the former valet Pheelka† would set off next day for Moscow, to live under a passport, and the same day I would step into his shoes. This Pheelka was a young man of two-and-twenty. He had held his situation for six years, (for the lady always chose for herself valets of that time of life), and though he had been a good-looking lad, his features were so altered, probably from grief and vexation, that he had all the appearance of a corpse. He was quite rejoiced at his deliverance, and waited with impatience for the day of his departure. But I anticipated him. As soon as it was dark, I

* Baba Eega is the heroine of a Russian nursery tale, in which her person is described by alliterations conveying not the most delicate ideas ; but the upshot of the story is that she eats her own god-child. The tale has some resemblance to the old English one of '*Little Red Riding-hood*.'

† Pheelka is a diminutive for Philip.

quietly took a horse out of the stable, leaped upon his back without a saddle, and rode to the high way at full gallop without knowing whither and wherefore.— Every time that my lady's charms recurred to my mind, I gave a kick extraordinary to the horse, as if she were behind me. Never man fled with such eagerness from bad treatment, as I from an opposite motive. At last, by day-break, I rode into the district-town to the *Eespravneek* whom I knew personally, as he frequently came to our village to collect money, I know not whether for himself or the government. I honestly told the *Eespravneek* what the housekeeper had said to me, and resolutely declared my intention to enlist as a soldier* rather than return to my mistress. The *Eespravneek* and his wife laughed till the tears came into their eyes, at my story, but to assist me was impossible, seeing that I made a mere verbal complaint without any proofs. My horse was put into the stable, and I myself into the lock-up room, and my mistress was informed of what had happened. I afterwards learned that the *Eespravneek* got a good round sum for quashing the information ; while I, for running away and stealing the horse, was whipped in the court and banished to an estate of my lady's in the government of Saratoff, where there was a vodka-distillery ; orders at the same time were given to treat me with the utmost rigour, and punish me as often as possible. Fortunately my lady did not know that the manager of the distillery who was also one of

* The next to the lowest point of human misery, according to the ideas of a Russian peasant, is to enter the army.

her serfs, was my second uncle. He pitied my unfortunate condition, ordered his clerk to teach me reading, writing, and arithmetic, and after that, employed me to assist him in keeping the accounts. Nobody in the distillery except my uncle knew of my adventures, and as he kept the people under strict controul, I was looked up to, being his assistant. At the end of ten years, my lady went to the other world, and with her ended my misfortunes. She was succeeded by her son whom she would not suffer near her eyes in her lifetime, because on one occasion, when at home from the regiment on a furlough, he took it into his head to make love to one of her *elevées** or, properly speaking, maid-servants, that is to say, orphans of people not exactly in the lowest condition. My young master knew the reason of my banishment, and on his arrival at the distillery, called me to him, spoke to me in terms of kindness, and, at my uncle's recommendation, made me manager of the distillery, while he gave him the management of the whole estate and his freedom at the same time. As I knew the business and was guided by the fear of God, I gained my master's favour. At last, in the course of twelve years, our good master died childless, and in his will gave me my freedom, along with other old household servants. By economy and industry, joined to the generosity of my good master, I amassed a small capital, and resolved to

* Most people in good circumstances in Russia who have no legitimate or illegitimate offspring of their own, adopt and bring up children of others, and the law grants great facilities to the bequeathing of property in such cases.

settle in Orenburg, where, chancing to be on a former occasion, I had looked out a bride for myself. It is now fifteen years since I came here and married, built this small house, and have, under God's protection, carried on a little traffic with the Kirgheez Tartars. God has blessed me with good children ; my oldest daughter is already fourteen years of age ; my second, twelve, and my youngest child, my son, in his tenth year. This is the way, Sir, in which I chanced to come here ! No one can foresee what is to happen from his birth, and God alone knows where we may leave our bones. But do you please to eat any thing ? This is a holiday and we can give you a pie* made with buck-wheat and Ural fish." I did not wish to part from my worthy landlord, and asked permission to dine along with his family, which he readily granted, adding—" If you are not upon ceremony, just do as you please."

It is a happy thing that nature and fortune distribute their gifts without regard to birth or pretensions. How many rich people would think themselves fortunate, if, in place of their yellow-faced or pale-looking children, they had such a healthy, rosy-cheeked offspring as my landlord's ! His wife, a woman of five-and-thirty, fresh, active, and industrious, was

* Pies are a favourite dish of the lower sort of Russians who are in good circumstances, particularly on holidays. They are usually baked of second flour with butter and suet, or stuffed with buck-wheat grits along with turned milk and carrots ; during the fasts, the flour is baked with hemp-oil, and the buck-wheat usually mixed with mashed mushrooms.

of as cheerful a frame of mind as her husband. My good host and hostess took a liking for me when we first met, and behaved like old acquaintances, while their oldest daughter cast some stolen looks at me, blushed and held down her large black eyes whenever they encountered mine. This girl appeared to me to be much prettier than Groonya ; but, as I had come expressly on Groonya's account, I resolved at last to question my landlord about her mother :—" Mrs. Shtoseen lives in our city," replied my landlord, " and keeps a full house. She has a daughter young and giddy, who attracts the gentlemen of the army as honey allures flies. It is two months ago that a young officer who lived with me, wanted to marry her ; but, having lost his money at cards, he took a second thought, and guessed rightly that Mrs. Shtoseen's house is nothing but a trap where people are daily plundered, and that her daughter is nothing but a decoy for simpletons. This officer told me a great deal of the proceedings, both of mother and daughter, but I do not like to repeat what is bad, and it is better for you, Sir, not to know." Dinner was over, and I did not dare to ask the landlord any further particulars. With a heavy heart I went into my room and lay down in bed. It was long before I could get any sleep for thinking of my bitter lot and woeful disappointment in my first friendship and my first-love. I comforted myself however with the reflection, that perhaps the stories of the officer to my landlord might not be true, and might be the ravings of a man who had ruined himself by play.

I resolved accordingly to believe nothing till I should see it with my own eyes.

Vorovaateen returned earlier than I expected. He was grave and serious. After a light supper, he went to bed, saying that he was indisposed. From vexation I followed his example, though I felt no inclination to sleep. About midnight, when I began to slumber, a strange noise in the adjoining room alarmed me. I rose out of bed, took hold of the handles of the door, and opening one half, I saw Vorovaateen sitting at the window, with nothing on him but his shirt, and his breast bare. His face was overcast with a deadly paleness ; the red spots assumed a violet colour ; his eyes were open, and it seemed as if they sucked in with greediness the rays of the moon : his hair was clotted together and stood on end. His lips quivered as if he attempted to speak, —— and on a sudden he began to beat his breast and tear his hair, gnashing with his teeth. I trembled for fear and durst not speak a single word, but could not leave the spot. Vorovaateen bawled out in a terrible, unearthly voice, and, on a sudden, began to speak loudly but very fast and unintelligibly. At last he grew calmer and spoke distinctly and comprehensibly :—“ What right have you to warn me, to threaten, to counsel ? You a priest —— God be with you ! Counsel him who seeks your instructions. I had recourse to you in time of sickness, and you, from knowing some of the secrets of my soul, have presumed to hector me at first meeting : no, father Peter, no ; your preaching is all wast-

ed upon me. I am well, I am well, and may live twenty or thirty years yet." After a slight pause, Vorovaateen continued—"True : it is time to call that to my recollection. How many credulous youths have I been the means of ruining ! I, like a fallen angel, teach the thoughtless ungodliness, and am myself afraid to appear before a righteous God ! Is it possible that I, who have recruited the ranks of hell, should save myself from the same fate ? No. Think again. Ruining the inexperienced by false play, betraying them into the hands of sharpers, instilling into the minds of those whom I led astray, a hatred for all the moral and civil obligations of mankind, for lucre's sake, I have up to this hour never yet attained riches which have been the object of my pursuit for a whole age. I have hardly fifty thousand roubles* ready money. That is little, very little. Look ye, father Peter ! As soon as I have made up the sum of a hundred thousand, I give you my word that I will become an honest man, will settle in a distant country where I am not known, and will live quietly and will cheat or ruin no one. I will keep all the fasts, go to church and pray regularly, and at my death will leave my money to build a monastery. I have three affairs at present on hand ; once they are finished, there will be little wanting to make up the hundred thousand. If I could but get that d—d Vejeeghen off my hands. But that is not my business ; I wash my hands of it. Let Nojoff proceed as he thinks proper.

* Rather more than £2000 Sterling.

It is his affair. I have fulfilled my part of the commission, have led him on a wild-goose chase to the frontiers of the empire. Oh father Peter, why do you stare on me so horribly? Cease preaching upon hell and the last judgment and everlasting fire! It is frightful, very frightful! I teach others to disbelieve it, and cannot hear of it myself without trembling. Avaunt, begone, father Peter! Horrible! horrible! Here is fire, here is blood, blood!" At these words Vorovaateen trembled all over, and fell from the window on the floor: his breathing ceased, as if his soul had left its earthly tenement. On a sudden he screamed out and shut his eyes. I myself grew almost insensible, and shook like an aspen leaf. Not daring to disturb Vorovaateen, and fearing I might awaken him, I summoned all my strength, reached my bed, and threw myself on it with exhaustion, as if it were after an attack of the ague. I was now confirmed in my suspicions that some conspiracy was on foot against me, and that the conversation overheard between Nojoff and Vorovaateen related to me. But who was that Nojoff? What had I done to him? What had I done to Vorovaateen? What countess wants my destruction? I never offended any woman in my life time. It must be some scheme of Grabeelen's. Of all the vistorers at my aunt's house, Grabeelen was the only one who did not like me. But a Countess! ——— Incomprehensible! With such and similar reflections I fell asleep at day-break from mere exhaustion. Thinking that Vorovaateen was in a fever, I resolved to employ the time of his illness for my

own deliverance, and to conceal myself from him and his friend Nojoff, who was also, no doubt, at this time in Orenburg.

To my astonishment, Vorovaateen next day arose from his bed in perfect health and spirits : I, on the contrary, felt a numbness through all my members, and found myself upon the whole quite out of order. At tea, Vorovaateen proposed to me to go a hunting next day, which I declined, fearing that he might on that occasion put his plot into execution. He told me that Mrs. Shtoseen was not in town, but would return in a few days, and advised me in the mean time to keep the house, adding, that he saw from my face that I was not well. I promised not to go out, but he had scarcely left the house when I dressed myself, and resolved to get authentic information about Mrs. Shtoseen, as I did not believe Vorovaateen. I wished at least to bid adieu to Groonya, and after that, to look out for ways and means to return to Moscow. I relied upon the assistance of my worthy landlord.

At ten o'clock in the morning, I was already in the neighbourhood of the house occupied by Mrs. Shtoseen, and learned from the neighbours that she had not left the town. There was a wicket from her garden to the street, and I entered that way in order to take breath and prepare myself for meeting with Groonya, against whom I had been so sadly prepossessed. Passing gently through a dark alley, I perceived a summer house at the end of it. Through the branches of trees and the trellis-work which com-

posed the walls of the summer house, I observed something white. Advancing on tiptoe nearer to the summer house, I overheard Groonya's voice conversing with a person of the other sex.

"I congratulate you, Groonya", said the gentleman, "on the arrival of an admirer from Moscow, and a successful admirer, Vorovaateen says: this youth, in reliance on your love and hand, has run away from his relations to see his sweetheart, a distance of some thousand versts. That is no joke, my dear Groonya: he certainly must have strong cause to expect a reciprocal affection on your part." Have done with your foolery, *mon cher Alexandre*, replied Groonya: "Vorovaateen intentionally stirs up your jealousy by silly stories. It is true that I knew this same Vejeeghen in Moscow, and perceiving his foolish passion for me, relieved myself from ennui at his expense. But do you seriously think, that such a little, unfledged scape-grace, who in the seventeenth year of his age, before he had finished his schooling, gave himself the airs of a gamester and a gallant; in a word, a hopeful disciple of that infamous rascal Vorovaateen; do you think that such a creature could engage my affections? My mother ordered me to pay him some little attention, because he always lost money at her card-table—and this is all our connexion. It grieves me that you should even in jest be jealous of such a school-boy." "But it is said," continued he, "that this Vejeeghen has very good features, is clever beyond his years, easy in his address, sings and plays on the piano and guitar excellently; in a word that he

is capable of turning the head"—"of some silly country fool," replied Groonya. "How could I think of preferring his wishy-washy, half-girlish face, to such a masculine countenance, such dear little whiskers, such martial eyes."—The gentleman did not allow Groonya to finish her sentence, and I heard the sounds of kissing.

Wounded self-love, anger and vexation, here got the better of me. I sprang like a madman out of the bushes, and appeared before the astonished lovers. Groonya sighed and covered her face with her hands. The officer of hussars leaped from his seat, knocked upon the ground with his sword, and exclaimed rudely; "Who are you, and how dare you come here without asking permission?" I did not answer a word to the officer, but, turning to Groonya, said; "You deceiver; you cheat! You call me a school-boy, a scape-grace: you say that you never loved me, and that you played upon my sincerity. But I have in my hands proofs, if not of your love, at least of your falsehood and coquetry. Here, do you see your hair, your letters in which you assured me of your eternal, your boundless attachment; and bound yourself to be mine for ever. I am now undeceived with regard to your worthless character, will exclaim against you every where, and read your letters to every body. Have you any curiosity Mr. Officer?" Groonya with eyes full of tears, throwing herself about the officer's neck, exclaimed, "Screen me from that blackguard, or I shall die of vexation! The impudent liar! If you love me, protect me!" It appeared that the officer

was not over much concerned for the delicacy of Groonya's feelings, and that in the enjoyment of the present, he did not trouble his head either about the past or the future. He threw himself on me like a madman, plucked out of my hands my letters and Groonya's hair, and, seizing me by the collar, he dragged me out of the summer house. Resistance on my part only drew down upon myself additional blows : the brawny officer tossed me out at the wicket, and giving me a kick, locked the door. I became insensible ; shame and confusion completely overpowered me. I ran home, wanted to shoot myself, to shoot the officer, and Groonya. A thousand shocking thoughts succeeded one another : but, on arriving at my lodgings, I felt a weakness creeping all over me. It appeared as if my skin was being seared with a red hot iron, and as if all my blood was blazing into flame. I soon lost my senses, and except a dreadful heat in my head, and thirst, I had no consciousness of being in the land of the living.

CHAPTER XIII.

A prisoner with the Kirgheez—Philosophic chieftain—I learn the art of horsemanship.

I do not recollect how long I continued insensible, but I came to myself in a dream. I dreamed that I fell into water, and lay in the bottom of a deep river. Cold made me awake. I opened my eyes and attempted to stir, but felt that I was wrapped up in something wet, and that I was bound. A sound like that which arises from playing the *goodka*,* fell upon my ears. With the greatest labour I turned my head from the wall to the light, and every thing which appeared before my eyes excited my amazement. I lay in a tent on a heap of felt, and saw I was wrapped up quite naked in a sheep-skin with the wool outwards. Beside my bed there sat a man in a striped *khalaat*, with a high, black, sheep-skin cap: he was playing on a *goodka* and singing with a plaintive voice, making a regular movement with his head and frightful grimaces. From this man's oblong eyes, dingy face, prominent cheek-bones and thin hair on the whiskers and beard, I recognised him as a Kirgheez. He was uncommonly glad when he perceived that I had opened my eyes, and exerting himself to relieve

* Russian guitar.

me from my captivity, leaped from his seat, turned about several times on his hands, and cried with all his strength, beating a drum which hung from his sash. At his cry several Kirgheez came in, and with them three women. One Kirgheez of a tall figure, dressed in a silk *khalaat* and small scull-cap embroidered with gold, approached my bed, and addressed me in pretty good Russian : “ What do you want ? Are you better ? ” “ I am cold,” replied I ; “ and want to eat or drink something hot. Order me to be unbound and dressed in some warm clothing.” “ Now you are surely well, when you want to eat,” said the tall Kirgheez. He sent away the females, and ordered two Kirgheez to take off the sheep-skin, to wash me and rub me with some strong ointment resembling gall, and cover me with *khalaats*, which was immediately executed. I wished to stand upon my legs, but from weakness fell down on my bed. In the meantime a young woman brought me a bowl of soup made with rice, and after drinking the strengthening liquid, I felt that my blood took a regular course, and that my strength returned. After I had satisfied my hunger, I fell asleep, and the tall Kirgheez perceiving this, ordered all to go out of the tent, saying : “ Don’t disturb yourself, but grow well. God is great in the clouds, and the *steppe* is not without good people ! ”

I fell asleep at sunset, and awoke at sunrise ; raised my head first, then stood up, and was very glad that I was able to stand on my feet. With difficulty I managed to get out of the tent. On seeing the sun and

the cloudless sky, I threw myself on my knees, and, with tears in my eyes, thanked God for delivering me from such a dangerous illness, and preserving my life. A strange scene appeared before me. The tents were erected on the shore of a lake; all around was seen the boundless *steppe*, and, in the midst of some few bushes, a numerous herd of sheep, horses, camels, and horned cattle was feeding. Men and women were occupied in working: some were milking cows and mares,—others were spreading out felt,—a third party was lighting fires and carrying water,—others were slaughtering sheep and horses. The talking and crying of people was mingled with the neighing of horses, the lowing of cows, and the bleating of sheep. I guessed that I was in a Kirgheezyan encampment, but could not conjecture how I had come there. My last recollection was confined to my meeting with Groonya, and arrival at my lodgings. After that, I thought that I was not alive, and that I had risen from the dead in a Kirgheezyan tent. The tall Kirgheezy in the silk *khalaat* was standing beside his tent, which was larger and handsomer than the rest. He was smoking tobacco, and looking all around him. On seeing me, he ordered one of his attendants to bring me to him. Guessing that he must be the chief, I made a bow to him, and begged permission to sit on the ground on account of my weakness. The chief ordered felt to be brought and placed under me; and he himself, sitting on a carpet opposite to me, said, “ You must know, Ivan, that you are my slave. I am the chief of a renowned division of the Kirgheezyan horde.

My name is Arsalan Sultan. Serve me faithfully if you wish to live happily. If I observe in you any desire to run away, I will sell you, or have you slaughtered like a sheep.”—This unanswerable speech did not afford over-much consolation to me on my recovery, but I had no alternative, and replied, with feigned equanimity, “I will serve you faithfully, and, though I have not yet been able to be of any service to you, I make free to ask you one favour, as a pledge of what may follow: tell me in what manner I fell into your hands? I was so unwell that I do not recollect what has happened to me.”—“As it is your wish, I shall tell you. I was in Orenburg upon business three weeks ago. On leaving town in the evening, I turned from the main road in order to regain the *steppe* by a by-way known to us, and saw two armed men who were taking something out of a cart. There were only four of my countrymen with me to lead my camels; the rest had gone on before us. Fearing that the Cossacks of the frontier might hear the report of our fire-arms, I did not chuse to fall upon the robbers, who were quarrelling with one another what was to be done with you. A tall flatfaced man with cropped hair wished to cut off your head; another palefaced thin man advised him to throw you on the ground, to avoid the shedding of blood, saying that without their aid you would soon give up the ghost. I heard their conversation at a distance, owing to the wind. They were frightened when I made up to them, and very glad when I declared that I did not wish to raise any brawl with them so near the town, and designed to

free them from farther trouble, by taking with me the person about whose fate they were quarrelling. The rascals consented, and gave you up to me on condition that I should not permit you to write to Russia to procure your ransom. I promised to do so, and they returned to the town. You lay in the heat of a fever, without feeling, wrapped up in a blanket. I immediately ordered two of our spare sheep to be slaughtered, wrapped * you up naked in their wet hides, and packed you up amongst the baggage on a camel. The wet skins, and a powder made from the dried legs of the bird Teelegoose, † which I always carry about with me, because it is also a remedy for the bite of mad dogs, kept alive the vital spark in your body. On our arrival in the camp, at my wives' request, I called in the most skilful *Baxa*, ‡ ordered him to try his skill upon you, and play upon the *Ko-beez*, || as long as your disease continued, changing the skins always for fresh ones of other animals, sometimes twice or thrice a-day. My wives fed you with gruel made of rice, and a decoction of the herb sheeraz; § and at length it pleased God and his prophet to spare you, for the honour and glory of serving me, Sultan Arsalan ! I pitied your youth ; your life now

* This is a Kirgheezean remedy.

† A bird resembling a partridge.

‡ Baxa is the same as the Siberian *Shamaun*, a prophet and surgeon.

|| A sort of guitar or fiddle, without an upper board. They play on it with a bow as on a violoncello. The *Baxas* make use of this instrument while engaged in prophesying.

§ A plant growing in the *steppe*, made use of for exciting perspiration.

belongs to me, and you must for ever give up all hopes of seeing again your native land. But tell me, who were those robbers who wished to murder you, and what was the reason of their enmity?"—After first thanking Arsalan Sultan for the care which he had taken of me, and renewing the assurances of my fidelity, I related to him in what manner I had left Moscow with Vorovaateen, in order to meet with Groonya; how I fell in with Nojoff, and overheard his conversation; and at last, how I learned Groonya's treachery, and after that fell into a fever from mental distraction. I declared to my new master that I suspected no one of a design to murder me, except Vorovaateen and Nojoff; but what tempted them to plot my destruction I could not tell, because I could not unriddle it myself. I could not believe that those rascals would have thought it worth their while to murder me for the sake of the few hundred roubles of mine which Vorovaateen had with him, on pretence of taking charge of them.—“It is a pity,” said Arsalan Sultan, “that I did not cut off from the face of the earth such heartless villains, who could employ their strength and courage against a poor sick youth: if they fall within my grasp another time, I shall leave their bones to dry on the *steppe*, and give their carcasses for a nest to serpents, which are much better than they. Look ye, Ivan, till you gather strength I do not ask you to work. My wives will give you meat and drink, and then we shall see what you are fit for.”—Arsalan Sultan's family consisted of three wives and four children,—three daughters, from five to seven

years of age, and one son about my time of life. All the three wives were young and pretty. If the rule were to be admitted that narrow eyes and prominent cheek-bones are no deformity, then Arsalan Sultan's wives would have been beauties, even in an European capital; and he himself, although he was beyond forty, might deserve the name of the Kirgheezyan Apollo. His son was born of his fourth wife, who no longer existed: but the young Gayuk experienced kindness and attention from all his three stepmothers,—a happiness of which step-sons cannot always boast in more polished communities. My master was fortunate in his family. His wives lived on friendly terms with one another, had cheerful tempers, and endeavoured to please their husband as far as they could. He was very affable in his demeanour towards his servants, and they loved me like their own brother. I was indebted to them indeed for my recovery.

Autumn came on, and we prepared to break up our encampment in search of winter quarters. Arsalan Sultan dispatched messengers to such of the neighbouring *aools** as were inhabited by his friends, to give notice of his shifting his quarters, and of the direction which he meant to take in the *steppe*. On the return of the messengers, all the baggage was packed up into different bales, the tents were struck, and the loads were put upon the backs of camels and baggage-horses, and on a given signal they formed into order for marching. Every family formed a separate divi-

* *Aool* is the Tartar name for an encampment.

sion. The children, old women, young girls, old men and sick, were seated on camels ; and all the men capable of bearing arms, and all the young women, were on horse-back, in their best apparel, as if it were an extraordinary holiday. The front, rear, and flanks of the caravan were covered by troops of horsemen armed with pikes, spears, sabres, and match-locks. The flocks and herds formed a separate detachment within sight of the caravan. When all was ready for marching, Arsalan Sultan ordered the *Bava* to begin his divination on the success of their undertaking. The *Bava* advanced in front, took a knife out of his belt, drew a circle round about him, with a stick, in the sand, and then, holding his knife to his throat, began to sing loudly. His singing was accompanied with outrageous screams and roars, which soon exhausted all his strength. He fell down like a lifeless corpse, his breathing was hardly discernible, and he apparently slept. The whole *aool* looked upon this prophetic farce, with silence and devotion. In a quarter of an hour the *Bava* began to move, and to speak as if in his sleep. Arsalan Sultan and the other elders attentively listened to his words, and concluded from them that we should have a prosperous journey. The exhausted *Bava* was seated on a camel, and on a signal being given, we advanced. I was stationed beside Arsalan Sultan on an unbroken horse, and was dressed in the Kirgheezyan fashion. By particular favour, and in compliance with the request of his wives, he made me his armour-bearer, or properly speaking, his military attendant. My duty consisted in holding his

horse, when he dismounted, handing him Kumeez,* filling his pipe, cleaning his musket, waiting at dinner, and amusing him with stories and songs. During the time of our first march, Arsalan moved to some distance from his people, and calling me to him, said: "You have seen something of our manner of life, Ivan, and I hope that you do not wish now to exchange our *steppes* for your own smoky towns, where people collect together to cheat one another, and contrive necessities which make them the slaves of all possible follies, and set them a crawling and fawning before every one who has it in his power to elevate them in the eyes of fools, and invest them with riches of which they know not either the value or the measure? What does man want?—To have his fill of meat and drink, to be clothed and comfortable. All this you will find with us. Without labour and trouble, you have your food and clothing from our flocks and herds, we do not bother our heads about the future, and we are always ready to repel force by force if molested by any enemy or false friend among our neighbours: we prefer our arms to stratagems, lying and cheating, the weapons used by your inhabitants of towns. You value the beauty of your towns by the breadth of the streets, by their extent, by the greatness of the buildings. Our temple is the open heaven, our city the boundless *steppe* where there is no want of room, and where neither wall nor fence controuls our liberty. I have been in Moscow and Petersburg,

* Strong drink made from fermented Mare's milk.

have seen all your wonders, and have been astonished to see wise people occupied with play-things and baubles, and sacrificing their health and peace merely in order to be always shut up in a splendid cage, whether in rest or motion, and to fill their stomachs with exotic dainties. I have taken a liking for you, Ivan, I wish to make you an experienced horseman, and shall teach you to manage a horse and a musket. If you should fancy any Kirgheezian girl, I shall be your spokesman, and shall do my endeavour to furnish your establishment." I thanked him for his kind disposition towards me, and added : " In my condition there is no choice left, and at all events I would rather be a warrior than a slave." After this, Arsalan Sultan ordered his horsemen to shew me their art.

He threw small pieces of Russian money on the ground, and his vaulters picked it up while at the full gallop : they rode with their feet on the saddle, stood upon it on their head, hit with their lances in the air stones thrown over their heads, wrapped up in dry grass ; they took off one another's caps and wrestled on horseback. The art and address of the Kirgheez in the management of horses, and in all military exercises enraptured me, and I begged Arsalan Sultan to have me taught as soon as possible the trade of a horseman. " Confess, Ivan," said he to me, " that that accomplishment is much more suitable for a man, than your melancholy movements of the legs to music, your hopping and whirling about, in which your youth shew off at what you call balls. I have seen your amusements, and have fallen asleep at them from ennui.

I observed, brother, that at first you unwillingly consented to become a Kirgheezian warrior, but I am persuaded that in time, when once your head gets cleared of the town-smoke, you will not part from us." In the meantime we arrived at our night-quarters. Before a lazy driver would have finished unharnessing his horses, our camels were already unloaded, the tents pitched, a fire made of dried bushes, and our kettles boiling. The women were employed in making ready our repast and milking cows and mares ; the men formed a stationary guard and patrol for our outposts. At the fires, joyous songs were going on, and piping on the *Kobeez* and *Tchebeezga*.* The sky was clear and studded with stars, and the air mild. Arsalan, while waiting for supper, was sitting before his tent on his saddle, and calling me to him, "Ivan," said he, "you speak in many tongues, therefore you know better than I, how to learn them. But, as we have neither books, nor schools, nor school-masters, I would advise you to learn Kirgheezian, and that cleverly. Ask the name of every thing, and chatter boldly what you know, without thinking of being laughed at. Necessity teaches more quickly than a master for money. To learn the language, I advise you to fall in love. That is the very best and most successful method. It was love which was my best schoolmaster in learning Russian. I shall tell you about that sometime. But know that in order to be a complete horseman, it is

* Pipes or flutes made of wood or reed, about 23 inches long.

not sufficient to know how to manage a horse and fire-arms, and to understand the language of our people : it is necessary also to know how to read on the heavens like a book. I myself will undertake that branch of your education." At these words I interrupted Arsalan's speech, and said to him : " How ! you surely do not wish to make a *Baxa* or prophet of me ?" Arsalan smiled. " I believe the predictions of the *Baxa* no more than you do," said he ; " but we have nothing to do with that : living in the *steppes* where fortunately people are not tied to one place like trees, we ought to know the marks by which we can wend our way day and night. By day our guides are the *Koorgans*,* the tombs erected above our deceased brethren, and bushes, lakes, rivers, elevations, and also the colour of the *steppe* ; and in the night-time, the sky. Do you see that clear star ? That is *Temeer kazeek* (the polar star,) the iron pole. It is always seen in the quarter whence winter and cold winds come. There the sun rests. On the right from *Temeer kazeek* the sun rises : opposite it stands at mid-day, and sets on the left. That star serves us in place of the case with the dart which you call the compass. There is *Tchooban Dgooldoos*,† (the shepherd's star,) which shews the time for driving the cattle from the pasture to the encampment, and for driving them back again. There is *Arcar*,‡ (the wild sheep :) these stars are hid in winter, and their return in spring corresponds with the reappearance of the fresh vegetation.

* Cairns or barrows. † Venus. ‡ The Pleiades.

But I do not wish to perplex you at present with a multitude of names. Learn to know the heavens and the earth, that you may stand in need of nothing but your own manhood." The night passed on favourably, and we by sunrise struck our tents and continued our march. After continuing our march in the same order for about ten days, we halted at the foot of a hill, which separates the rest of the *steppe* from the north, and we took up our quarters in the neighbourhood of a rivulet. As the old men, from different signs, foretold a hard winter, we began earlier than usual to construct double-felted tents, and to prepare a quantity of wood, reeds, and dry bushes. Of provisions we provided mostly dried flesh, and a drink made of soured rye-flour, similar to the wort used in distilleries.

In the meantime, by Arsalan Sultan's orders, I was daily taught the military business and horsemanship. They began by tying me to an unbroken horse, and launching me into the *steppe*, in order to drive out of me as they said my town-tameness. They would not give me any meat but what they placed on the ground; and I was obliged to procure my dinner by lifting it while sitting on my horse, first at a pace, then at the trot, and lastly at full gallop. Flour cakes baked on the coals, which are with them the greatest delicacy, I had to pick up on the point of my lance, at full gallop; and they would not allow me to partake of game till I was myself able to hunt the antelope on horseback, and knock it down with my whip. They would not allow me to ride except at full speed. In this way, by the time that

the frosts came on, I had become a tolerable horseman, by following the simple rule, ‘necessity forms a stone.’

CHAPTER XIV.

Arsalan Sultan's relation of his adventures in Russia.

SNOW fell, and the Kirgheez spent the greater part of their time in their tents, sitting around their fires, and listening to story-tellers. Our flocks and herds were all this time in the open plain, and fed upon the herbage under the snow. Except the driving of cattle from place to place, watching them, and the making ready of the victuals which consisted more of flesh during the winter season, we had no other work. The Kirgheez during their inactivity give themselves up to the pleasures of imagination. Their tales are full of the marvellous and supernatural, and have always for their subject some horseman, who in his wanderings through the *steppe*, fights with tyrants and oppressors of the fair sex, and with magicians, hunts after beauties, robs rich caravans, and at last returns to his *aool*, and reposes on his laurels. Love is always the chief topic of these stories : their songs also breathe the tender passion and heroism. Understanding enough of the Kirgheezian language to be sensible of the monotonous nature of these tales, I grew soon wearied of them, and one evening begged Arsalan Sultan to relate his real adventures. He made good his promise. In the following narrative, the thoughts alone belong to Arsalan Sultan, as it is ob-

vious that, after such a lapse of time, it would be impossible for me to retain the originality of the Kirgheezian idiom. Arsalan spoke Russian with some few mistakes, but not more than we frequently meet with in the conversation of such of our grandees as have received from their cradle a foreign education. He related as follows :—

“ It is so ordained, that man, gifted as he is with an immortal soul, should exceed in wickedness and obduracy all irrational creatures ; and, not content with treading and feeding upon other animals, should direct his incessant endeavours towards the oppression of his fellows. You see, Ivan, that we in our *aool* live in peace and concord like brethren of the same family ; but do not suppose that this friendship and this love extends to all our race. No ! every branch, every horde are at enmity amongst themselves : an injury done in another *aool*, or another horde, to a single Kirgheez, creates a breach between all his *aool* or horde. That is a general case or *baranta*, although only a common custom, but it is stronger than any law : for you may remark, that people are readier in calling into use their wicked propensities or personal advantages than the rules of wisdom.

“ My father, besides being a favourite of the Khan, was also one of his relations ; but our Khans are powerless, and my father could not by means of his protection shield himself from the vengeance of a powerful Sultan who commanded the tribes of Tcheezleck and Dertkarik, who are the bitterest enemies of Russia. The pretence for this quarrel was my fa-

ther's having received presents from the Russian Court; but the enmity was in reality occasioned by the preference shewn by my mother to my father, when she had been courted by the two suitors. Frequent inroads and pillagings on the part of his enemies obliged my father to retire from the heart of the *steppe* to the Russian frontiers, and beg assistance in powder and fire-arms from the Russians. As a pledge of his fidelity and devotion to Russia, my father delivered me with several other young people as hostages, wishing me to see the world, and observe the arrangements of civilized countries, and be at the same time useful to my countrymen by my acquired knowledge.

"I was then about your years, Ivan. We were sent to Moscow, where a superintendant was set over us, that is, a government officer, whose duty consisted in providing for our maintenance at the expense of the crown, in accompanying me everywhere, shewing me what was curious, and looking after our behaviour. This officer, who had lived long on the Orenburg line, knew something of our language. From Moscow we were sent to Petersburg, where the government gave us a Tartar interpreter and a Russian teacher.

"I confess to you, that the splendour of luxury, the display and appearance of universal contentment, had at first a powerful effect upon me, and excited a desire either to remain for the rest of my days an inhabitant of that city, or to build a town on my own territories, and follow the same arrangement.

"My curiosity could not be sated. I wished to see and know every thing, and cried from vexation if I

could not reach what I saw, or understand what I heard.

“ The Empress, Catherine the Second, was pleased to express a wish to see me. I was elegantly dressed, and brought in a coach and six to the palace. With pride I surveyed the mob from the carriage windows and fancied that the eyes of the whole metropolis were upon me, because all who were passing at the time made a stand, and from curiosity stared at me. On proceeding through one street, we could not get on for the immense crowd which blocked up the street, and put questions about me to the superintendant. On a sudden we heard the sounds of music, and monkeys were seen at the open windows of a neighbouring house. The mob, without waiting to hear what the superintendant had to say, ran to the monkeys, and we went on quietly. This was the first shock to my self-esteem, and I formed a very low opinion of a mob which preferred monkeys to the son of a sultan. I did not at that time find out that it is as difficult to keep steady the attention of any mob as it is to fix the wind, and that fear is their only never-failing remembrancer.

“ The Empress received me very graciously, caressed me, gave me presents, and sent me home, giving the grandees of her court particular charge concerning me, with orders to take me into society, in order that I might form a better judgment of the advantages of civilization. The Empress’s notice brought me into fashion, like a new arrangement of the hair or a new cut of a coat. In the city there was no ball, great

dinner, or rout, where the handsome Kirgheez was not present. This name was given me by the leaders of the *ton*, because it had been said at court, "This little prince is not so ugly as the Kirgheez are generally represented." Gentlemen and ladies of quality were amused with my simplicity, and I was amused with their talkativeness, and the stupidity with which they took great things for small, and small things for great. One day I found a worthy family in tears and grief; all were weeping, from the father to the child at the breast. "What has happened to you?" I asked the landlady.—"Ah! my dear prince, you knew our uncle."—"What of him? Is he dead?"—"If he were only dead it would not be half so bad, because he has already begun to squander his property, which my children should inherit; but he—ah!—he has lost the good graces of his powerful patron!"—"What was the cause of this disaster?"—"The indiscreet use of his tongue. Our uncle's patron prided himself on having invented a new fish-sauce; my uncle told his friends in a secret that it was his invention, and after that, good-bye to friendship and patronage."—I could not refrain from laughing, and this laugh was ascribed to my ignorance and wildness.—Another time, I found, in despair, a friend of mine, a well-educated youth. He wanted to shoot himself,—wanted to run away to the Kirgheezian *steppe*, to hide himself from the world.—"What misfortune preys upon your mind, my worthy friend?" I asked.—"My dear prince, my father has cursed me!"—"How! your father cursed you! you have

surely committed some crime to disgrace your father.”
“ I did not play into his hand at boston.”—“ How ?
and for that he has cursed you.”—“ Cursed me, and
banished me from his favour !”—I laughed heartily.
“ Be consoled, my worthy friend : that damnation will
not go up to heaven, but will remain at the card-table
till some clever fellow turn the tables upon him, that
good people may have a laugh at the expense of a
conceited papa.”—“ The affair in question is not in
heaven but on earth,” returned my friend ; “ the con-
sequences of that damnation are—I am cut off from
all pecuniary aid. My father is glad now that he has
found an opportunity to deny me money.”—“ Why
does your father take such care of his money ?”—
“ To give meat and drink to a crowd of interlopers,
who laugh in his face at his folly ; prize his exotic
wines and rich dishes, as if they were proofs of wis-
dom and beneficent qualities—in fine, of every thing
worthy of a gentleman.”—“ As you like it ; but you
appear to me quite laughable with your unreasonable
customs,” said I to my friend.—“ What is fun to one
is grief to another,” replied he.

“ What appeared to me the strangest of all, was the
estimation of people received into the higher circles.
There, neither wit nor mental endowments nor beha-
viour were of any consideration.

“ The first question regularly was, “ How many
souls has he ?” The second, “ What rank ?” The
third, “ Of what family ?” The fourth, “ Of what
connections ?” If all these points answered the expec-
tations formed, or if only one point was sufficiently

powerful to overbalance the deficiency of the others—no matter whether the man should be a rogue, a cheat, a robber, an oppressor—the doors of all houses were open to him, a smile was always on the face on meeting him, and a fresh invitation when he went away. But money—oh! for money! An unbrushed, unrubbed boor, who some years before has been retailing *vodky* to footmen and coachmen, and grown rich by cheating, is received in the houses of these gentry better than a poor warrior who has no other recommendation than his services. But your dinners! your dinners put me beside myself: like dogs, who fawn upon those who feed them, your enlightened people, for a savoury dish or a bottle of wine which they otherwise might have at home, crowd the house of every rascal, every robber, and not only pardon his want of conscience but screen him from justice. In your courts of law, some play at blindman's buff, and in their eagerness lay hold of right or wrong; others sell justice by the weight, like physic in the apothecaries' shops, according to the recipés of secretaries and lawyers. In a word, I was convinced that your civilization consists in the art of speaking and writing what is useful to others, and of doing what is useful to self. Words and actions with you stand so contrasted, that if any one say of himself, "I am an honest man," that denotes that he is a rogue: whoever says, "I am rich," means that he is poor, that is, in debt; but when one declares himself, and cries out everywhere that he is poor, that denotes that he is rich, but wishes to be still richer. Whenever a man cries

out about the public welfare, it is a sign that he is seeking private advantages to himself; and he who preaches up freedom, shews that he wants to subject others. On considering all these contradictions for the course of four years, I compared your civilization and advantages of a city life with our independence and ignorance, and felt a strong desire to return to the *steppe*, and forget, like a dream, every thing which I had seen and heard. I had already made up my mind to ask for permission, when I was on a sudden kept back by an unforeseen obstacle,—that is to say, love.

“As is the usual custom in Russia, the lodgings hired for us wild Asiatics, were in a distant part of the town, in order that we might more freely carry on our religious exercises and make ready our victuals according to our fashion, without exciting the attention of the curious. One day, as I was passing on foot through a quiet lane, I heard in a poor looking dwelling the sighs and pitiful cries of some female. By an involuntary emotion I ran into the house. A mournful spectacle appeared before my eyes. A young woman, beautiful as an angel, held in her arms an old woman who was in a fit of fainting, and wept in despair, not knowing how to assist her. I, without speaking a word, ran into the passage, and finding a bucket of water, returned into the room with a mugful, sprinkled the sick woman’s face, and rubbed her temples, and the veins of her arms, and at last brought her to her senses, laid her on a bed, and asked leave of the fair maid to run immediately for a doctor. I thought that the girl at first did not perceive me, being so absorbed

with the thoughts of her mother's distress, but at last she turned towards me her beautiful azure eyes in which the tears were still visible, and blushing, thanked me in a soft tone of voice. My Kirgheezian dress put the fair maid into confusion ; she looked at me with stolen glimpses from head to foot, and did not know what to say. "Don't be frightened, madam," said I. "I am a Kirgheez, a native of the wild *steppes* ; but the Kirgheez have also hearts, and they know what compassion is for a neighbour's misfortune. Be open with me as with a man who regards as a rich prize every opportunity of being useful to the suffering and unfortunate. I see that you are in want ; that is expressed in your dwelling. Oblige me by taking this small help for your sick mother." Without waiting for the fair maid's answer, I threw on the table a purse of ducats and went away in haste. The girl wished to keep me by the hand, begged me to take back the money ; but without listening to her, I plucked myself away by force, and ran home instantly. I had seen many Russian beauties, yet they never had made any powerful impression upon me. But the image of that poor girl was imprinted on my heart and memory. She was day and night present in my imagination, and I was tormented more than a week, not knowing what to do with myself, and not daring to return to her house, dreading that she might return me the money, and thus deprive herself of what she stood so much in need. In vain I endeavoured to forget the fair maid : she however kept possession of me like life or soul, and my Asiatic blood boiled as if a flame burned within my

heart. Neither the amusements of the great world, nor reading, of which I was very fond, nor solitude, could quiet me. At last, I resolved to see her again. I went thither in the evening. An incomprehensible shyness kept me back at the door. I stopped beside the window which was closed and the shutters on, and overheard a dispute in the room, and a voice which I did not know. "Be ashamed of yourself, be ashamed of yourself!" said the woman. "How dare you propose dishonour to me in barter for your protection which I despise. Look at my daughter; she cannot pronounce a word from excess of indignation, and does not wish to debase herself by ignominy. We are poor, and unprotected, and destitute, and that is the reason why you are so presumptuous; but if my husband had been alive, he would, notwithstanding your riches and rank, know how to make you think again." "Have done, have done, mother, don't be offended," replied a tremulous voice; "it would be much better for you to give me your daughter to be brought up under my protection, than to marry her to any petty-fogging clerk or non-commissioned officer. And you, my little beauty, don't be shy: come hither, and allow me to kiss those rosy cheeks." "Leave me in peace!" screamed the fair maid, and I heard the noise of a table upset. The thoughts of oppressed innocence excited my wrath; like a madman I flew into the room, and saw a shabby-looking old man, dressed like a fop, pulling about the girl, and attempting to kiss her against her inclination. I took hold of him by the waist, carried him like a bag of straw into the yard,

and threw him on the dirt. Two footmen standing at the corner of the house, ran on their master's calling for assistance, and fell upon me. But despair and fury redoubled my strength. I took a billet of wood in each arm, fell upon my antagonists, and drove them out at the gate. The old debauchee fled to his carriage which stood at the corner of the street, and called his servants to him. I soon heard the sound of the carriage moving along the street at full speed ; I shut the wicket and returned to the room. The tears of gratitude were my recompense. The mother thanked me for the kindness and protection which I had shewn them ; the daughter was silent, but her silence was more eloquent than the words of the old woman. The old lady told me her history. Her husband had served as a commissary in the fleet, and was an honest man. After his death he left his family no other property but the right to receive a small sum from the treasury for a prize which had been taken by the crew of the vessel in which he served. His successor presented some claims against the deceased, in illustration of the proverb, that ' the dead and absent are always to blame.' The business at this time was brought before that baneful old man, who, on seeing Sophia, proposed to her to purchase by her dishonour a favourable decision and his protection for the future. Of course, his offer was rejected with a disdain peculiar to noble minds ; but the old man did not put an end to his persecutions, and even began to threaten the unfortunate mother, that he would imprison her for spending property belonging to government, if her

daughter did not comply with his wishes. When I found the mother in a fit, it was in consequence of these tidings. The mother and daughter lived by their manual industry, doing work for the *magazins de modes*; but the stubborn old creature, to reduce them to extremities, deprived the poor unfortunate family even of this means of subsistence, by paying the shop-keepers expressly not to buy any thing from Sophia, or give her any work. Poverty, one of the greatest misfortunes, the general object of dislike amongst civilized nations, soon visited the worthy family; and, if I had not come to their assistance, Sophia would have hired herself to weed in a garden, in order to procure subsistence for her sick and weakly mother: for except the clothes which she had on, every thing was sold. I never in my life had shed tears, and for the first time wept at the relation of the old woman's miseries. "Allow me to interfere in this business," said I. "If I do not find justice amongst the *grandees*, I shall find it at a higher source." "Do not think of that, my good Prince," replied the old lady. 'Before the sun is up, the dew corrodes the eyes.'* We intend not to pursue the business farther, but to retire to some relations of ours who live in a distant town. If you have any acquaintances, beg them only to prevent that gentleman whom you saw here, from persecuting us. His name is Pheroolken, and he has the rank of general. But I beseech you, do not go to him, for he may make you repent your

* Russian proverb.

rashness. In the meantime, take your money back ; we cannot receive in a present such a large sum.” “ You may give the money back when you receive from the treasury what is due you : as to what regards Mr. Pheroolken, don’t be apprehensive ; I do not fear him.” After remaining some time with these unfortunate people, I returned home, more in love with Sophia than before. Next morning, I went to the court where Pheroolken sat, and waited him on the stair-case. He was astonished to see me, and probably would have changed countenance if he had been able. But he had not a drop of blood in his whole body. “ What do you please, my dear prince ?” said he nodding. “ To speak alone with you.” “ Shall be very glad, but this is not the proper place. Please to call upon me to-morrow morning at nine o’clock. I shall receive you with pleasure.” Next day, I was at the appointed hour in Pheroolken’s lobby. The footmen had orders to admit me ; but as there were several petitioners in the hall, and the secretary was busy in the cabinet, the valet took me to an inner room through Pheroolken’s dressing room. On passing through, I involuntarily stopped to look at things which I had not seen before. “ What is the use of those two stitched bags with strings ?” asked I.— “ These are the calves of my master’s legs,” replied the footman. “ But what bird’s nest is that ?”— “ That is his hair !” “ But those bones ?” “ That is his teeth.” “ But what are those paints on the table amongst the brushes, powder and pomatum ?” “ That is the colouring of my master’s face.” “ Good !” said

I, laughing : “in him there is neither body nor soul !” “ I beg your pardon,” answered the valet. “ He has three thousand souls ; these are of more weight than one of his own.” I understood the drift of the wily valet’s jest, and concluded from that, that Pheroolken must be a disagreeable man in all points of view when his own servants have no respect for him. I was called into the closet ; Pheroolken took me by the hand, and very kindly begged me to be seated. “ Let us forget the past,” said he ; “ you behaved very rudely towards me, but I forgive you, as you are not acquainted with the rules of civil society. In our country you may murder or shoot a man, but you must not touch him with your naked hands. Besides, you had no reason for being angry with me. I was in quest of game the same as you, and did not know that the pigeon had been first brought down by you.” “ I beg you will speak without circumlocution,” said I raising my voice. “ I have only seen twice in my life the poor girl whom you are persecuting, and am resolved to protect her from mere sympathy.” “ Sympathy in the Kirgheezian *steppe* !” archly replied Pheroolken. “ There is more of it there, than in your gilded palaces and courts of law,” replied I seriously. “ But however that may be, if you do not give up persecuting Sophia, and decide in the affair concerning her deceased father according to law, I swear to you by my life and fortune, that I shall fall at the feet of our just Empress, and will lodge a complaint against you ; and in the meantime I will inform all the grandees and people about the court of our meeting at Sophia’s.”

“ Be quiet, be quiet, and don’t get into a passion !” said Pheroolken. “ Even without that, it would be a pleasure to me to oblige the Kirgheezyan prince. I give you my word of honour, that I shall think no more of your Sophia, and to-morrow shall subscribe the decision in favour of her mother, as the business is already gone through. Let it be a bargain between us. Not a whisper to any one.” “ Here is my hand to you!” Pheroolken embraced me, and with haste conducted me out of the closet. I flew to Sophia with the joyful news, and was again overloaded with caresses and thankfulness. Next day the decision was subscribed, and in a week the money was paid. Pheroolken no more appeared in that quarter of the town where Sophia lived. He kept his word—I suppose for the first time in his life. I ceased to think of returning to the *steppe*. Sophia loved me and was happy, and lived a new life. We concealed our love from her mother, because she would never have consented on any consideration to let her daughter marry a Mahomedan. I did not know what to resolve upon. The death of her mother gave Sophia full liberty to dispose of herself. The good old woman, weighed down with years and griefs, died, half a year after our first acquaintance. Sophia remained an orphan, and declared to me that she was ready to follow me not only to the *steppe* but to the world’s end, to an unpeopled wilderness.

“ It was necessary to take some precautions. Sophia went before me to Orenburg, and after obtaining leave from the Empress, I set off afterwards. Not knowing whether my father would allow me to marry

a poor orphan, I left Sophia in a neighbouring *aool*, with a friend, and appeared before my father alone. "Father," said I, "you have experienced what love is, and surely will not condemn your son if he chooses a wife for himself according to his heart's desire, and not according to calculation." "I would have wished you to marry a daughter of the Sultan, my benefactor," said my father to me; "but if you have already fixed your eyes upon a bride, and do not wish any more wives, do as you please. You know it is not I, but yourself that have to live with your wife!" I related my adventure to him, and the same day Sophia was in his arms. Our old women were angry, because I had married a foreigner. The young girls were not pleased; but my brave horsemen agreed that Sophia was worthy of being a Kirgheez. The Khan himself was desirous of seeing my wife, and applauded my choice ——"

Arsalan ceased speaking, and covered his face with his hands. I saw his tears. At last he said: "I was happy ten years with Sophia. Gayuk is the fruit of our love. She died! According to the custom of our nation, and by order of the Khan, I was obliged to marry again. I have now three wives; they are good women; you know them. But I loved Sophia alone, and have never consoled myself for her loss. Ivan! believe me, in the Kirgheezian *steppe* love and friendship are known, although they cannot tell fine stories about them. Now you know why I love the Russians. Sophia unites me with you. This is why, in spite of our usual custom, I behave to you my slave as if you were my equal. I was happy with a Russian. Rus-

sian blood runs in the veins of my Gayuk; and, although I saw many follies in your country, that is the general lot of all civilized nations, as I learned from books; and you are only to blame, because you import foreign follies. I found many good people in Russia, worthy to live with us in these *steppes*, and their memory is dear to me. Now go to sleep, Ivan! I am sick at heart; I shall sit on my horse and dissipate my grief in the *steppe*. The recollection of past miseries consoles a man; but the remembrance of bygone joys never to return, fills the heart with anguish—adieu! Hey! my horse!” Arsalan leaped upon his stallion, and rode off in the moonlight at full gallop. I grew melancholy myself. I loved the worthy Sultan with all my heart.

CHAPTER XV.

Consequences of a hard Winter in the Steppe—Attack—Joyful Meeting with my first benefactor.

WE live in a continual illusion, and see objects only as they appear in the magic mirror of the passions. But if illusion is pardonable in a man, it is only so when he does not see the faults of his parents and his father-land. For as much as the noble Arsalan endeavoured to convince me of the superior excellence of his own *steppe*, neither the eloquence of his polished mind nor the simplicity of the wild children of nature could make me forget Russia. The winter redoubled my melancholy: living in a *yoort* with Gayuk and several of his companions, and finding no relief but in the conversation of Arsalan, I grew weary in the long evenings, and thought about my country and my good aunt, who would be no doubt in despair when she learned that I had disappeared without any accounts of me. The coarse diet, dirtiness, and smoke in the *yoorts*, and the hard frost in the *steppe* where we had to patrol and to look after the cattle, were vexatious to me, and made me feel more powerfully what I had left. At last the frost increased to an incredible degree. Our cattle could not get from under the snow the herbage, which, on this occasion, lost its nourishing quality. The drift covered the cattle

with snow, and the piercing cold winds stopped the breath of every living thing.

At last misery made its appearance, the greatest of all to a pastoral tribe—the distemper amongst the cattle. In vain the *Baxas* employed their divinations and nostrums : our flocks and herds diminished continually, and there was no means to put a stop to the distemper. Besides, the healthy animals stumbling amongst the snow-hillocks, and not having strength to grub up the deep and hard snow, fell from exhaustion. This was accompanied with a deficiency of provision and fire-wood. Despair pervaded all our hearts. In place of merry songs, were heard the whistling of winds and the moans of dying animals. The women and children concealed their tears before their husbands and fathers, but an artificial equanimity could not conceal the general grief. Arsalan displayed more courage than all the rest. He induced us to work by his example. He himself presided at our common labours and roused up the desponding ; he himself dug for food for the riding horses from under the heaps of snow ; he himself rode with us for reeds and the twigs of young trees ; he himself looked after the cattle, and assigned new places of pasture for them. Fearing lest the distemper should deprive us of all our live stock, we slaughtered the greater part of our sheep, and buried the flesh in the ground, using our dry provisions with the greatest economy. Fortunately the rich Kirgheez had laid in a stock of brick-tea,* which

* The commonest and cheapest sort of tea, which is used

we drank several times in the day, preparing it at first like soup with milk, butter, and salt, and afterwards when there was not enough of milk and butter, simply with salt and sheep's fat. This beverage kept up my strength. The rye-flour which Arsalan Sultan had provided at Orenburg, served only for a dainty.—The Kirgheez do not make use of bread, but boil a sort of porridge with flour, and bake cakes on the coals. Only one Sultan had rice and that in small quantity. Wheat was kept for the women and unwell persons. Although we did not as yet experience real famine, with the loss of our cattle, that misery threatened us in spring.

At last, winter passed away, the snow thawed, verdure again appeared upon the earth, the distemper ceased, but we remained poor. Without external aid, famine would steal upon us before the end of the spring. All this was foreseen, but nobody knew what to resolve upon. Some advised to enter into the Russian service, for pay ; others wished to ask assistance from the Khan. Arsalan intended to conquer our misfortune by force of arms. One day he called an assembly of the elders ; and when all were seated on the ground and were smoking their pipes, he pronounced the following speech:—"It is my duty to care for you. I do what I can ; but in all this, it was out of my power to shorten the frost or put a stop to the

mostly in Siberia by the Mongolian tribes. It is sold in pieces of a form similar to bricks, and in the frontier towns of China is used as a substitute for money. Goods are valued by the number of these pieces of tea.

distemper. I do not wish to conceal from you that a still greater misfortune threatens us. Our enemies, learning our weakness and wants, will fall upon us, and cut us all off, or make us their slaves. It is only desperate courage which can save us. It is better to prevent misery by combating evident dangers, than with littleness of mind to wait the shock.* I have received intelligence that a rich caravan is on its way through the *steppe*, and that the enemy of our tribe, Sultan Alteen, escorts the caravan with his best horsemen. Let us mount our horses and go to meet them, beat them, take the caravan, and, by one hardy movement, deliver ourselves both from the enemy and from famine. This is my design. Make it known to my horsemen. Let him who does not fear death, and who wishes to save his race from destruction and misery, follow me : I will take none but volunteers." Some of the elders wished to prevent him, but Arsalan rose from his seat and said :—" I force no one to go with me. He who is not pleased with my design, may remain in the *aool*, and after my departure talk as he thinks proper. At present I beg you merely to repeat my words in your families, without any observations ; but if I learn that any of you dares to sow discord, recollect that Arsalan Sultan has a *keenjal*,† an *arkan*,‡ and a *nagaika*.§ Adieu !" All departed without any further remarks, and Arsalan ordered me to re-

* Better to sink beneath the shock,
Than crumble piece-meal on the rock.

BYRON.

† A dagger.

‡ A halter.

§ A whip.

main. “ Well, Ivan, will you go with me, or remain with the women ? ” “ To be sure I will go with you through fire and water,” exclaimed I. Arsalan sat down upon the ground, considering ; and, after a short silence, said, “ Reflect well, Ivan : we are going to almost certain death. In our desperate condition I do not see any other means of deliverance but an attack. We will have to fight with brave and powerful antagonists ; they will be probably double our number, and if we do not conquer, we must die. I, being commander, will have to shew an example in my own person, and to conceal the danger in the presence of my people. But with you I wish to be open. I am sorry for you. I give you your liberty. Take my horse and go to your own country. Why should you be a partaker of my bitter lot ! ” I threw my arms about the good Sultan, and with tears in my eyes replied—“ No, Arsalan Sultan, I will not leave you in danger ! A Kirgheez does not excel a Russian in magnanimity. You saved my life ; you have treated me, not like a slave, but like a son, like a friend : you have taught me the use of fire-arms, and I would be unworthy of my freedom if I were so little-minded as to flee from you, when you are going to meet death. I will go with you, will fight beside you, shield you with my arms, and we shall either fall together, or I will celebrate the victory along with you.” Arsalan embraced me, and in tears said—“ Be it so ! ”

Next day, at dawn, a hundred excellent horsemen were in all readiness for action. In addition to them, there were about twenty men with baggage-horses, and

some camels loaded with provisions. To my astonishment I saw no signs of lamentation among the women, and heard no sighing when they took leave of their husbands and lovers. Those who were not able to conceal their grief, did not show their faces. Others, folding their arms, in silence regarded our preparations for advancing. That silent grief and melancholy had a more powerful impression upon the hearts of the warriors than a loud demonstration of sorrow. Arsalan appeared in a rich *shoob*,* mounted on horseback. He turned towards the crowd of women, old men and warriors who remained for the protection of the *aool*, and saying, "Adieu," galloped away into the *steppe*. The horsemen followed him, bidding farewell to their dears in dumb-show. After we had gone such a distance from the *aool*, that we could see nothing but its smoke, we halted to allow the baggage-cattle to get up with us, which we had always to keep within sight. In our first *bivouac* on the *steppe*, we took up a position beside a *koorgan* (cairn); the horses were let loose into the *steppe*, sentinels were posted round, and fires being lighted, we arranged ourselves in a circle upon our felts. Next day, we took the direction of the river Seer-Deryá, and continued to move in a single column, guided by the *koorgans* and the course of the sun, and attesting the correctness of our movements in the night time by the position of the stars. We went a long way without meeting a living soul in the *steppe*; and at last, on the seventh day in the even-

* Fur coat.

ing, we saw a smoke from afar ; but the horsemen who were sent forward informed us that it was the *bi-vouac* of a caravan. We halted, and Arsalan resolved in the night-time to reconnoitre and inform himself exactly if this caravan were the same which was the object of our expedition, to fall upon it in the morning and finish the affair. Eight of our best horsemen were detached towards the caravan in three directions.—Four of them made haste and crept in amongst the reeds on the banks of a small lake, at such a distance that they could hear the voices of the guard, and see the faces of the enemy. We in the meantime stood ready for action, and resolved to set out on the first alarm, to rescue our reconnoiters : but they returned safe, and informed us that it was covered by a numerous body, and that to fall upon it in the night-time would be dangerous, because a sort of fortification was made of the bales of goods, and the guard armed with match-locks kept a sharp look out. We retired some versts to a side, and took up our night's quarters beyond a hill, that our fires might not be seen. Arsalan collected his warriors into a circle, and made the following disposition. Our forces were formed into three divisions. He himself with fifty horsemen was to remain in the centre. One detachment of five-and-twenty men had to make a false attack on the front of the caravan, and another detachment of equal strength on the flank. When this should be executed, then our main body was to fall upon the centre of the caravan, and endeavour to cut out a part of it, and protect their booty by covering it with the horsemen of the

two smaller detachments, who were then to endeavour to unite with the main body, retiring from both flanks of the caravan, and drawing off the enemy's horsemen farther from it. I, with Arsalan's son, Gayuk, was included in the main body. Before day-break, our two small detachments set off, and we remained behind them and extinguished the fires, in order that the smoke might not be seen with the day-light. About mid-day we heard from a distance the tramping of horses and the cries of the camel-drivers. Arsalan, wrapped in a horse-coverlet, climbed up the hill, in order to observe the caravan. When he was out of sight, we mounted our horses, and set off immediately after him. As soon as we heard the reports of fire-arms, we galloped towards the caravan, and on getting up to it, commenced the attack with loud cries. The enemy not choosing to waste their powder upon our two detachments, and seeing their numerical inferiority, fell upon them with pikes, and left the caravan at a distance. We availed ourselves of this opportunity, encountered those who remained behind, beat them, took possession of the greater part of the caravan, drove all the loaded camels into one body, and resolved to defend our booty to the last extremity.—Sultan Alteen observing our success, gave up the pursuit of our small detachments who made a feint as if they would save themselves by flight, and had enticed him farther into the *steppe*. On returning to the caravan, Alteen fell upon us with fury, perceiving in the crowd his personal enemy Arsalan Sultan. Arsalan also could not restrain his rage, and, seizing a lance,

left his own people and threw himself upon Alteen. Rising upon his horse, Arsalan closed upon his antagonist, and was already prepared to give him a blow, but in that very moment a shot was fired. Arsalan's horse fell and knocked his rider under him.

With hellish joy, Alteen leaped from his horse, and unsheathing a Turkish *yataghan*, threw himself upon the prostrate Arsalan, with an intention to cut off his head. I was within a few paces of Arsalan, and on seeing his danger, took a loaded pistol out of my belt, cocked it and fired, and Alteen fell dead beside his enemy, who in the meantime succeeded in extricating himself from under his horse. Arsalan seized upon Alteen's *yataghan*, and with that weapon cut off his head, put it on the end of a pike, and rode towards his people. Alteen's horsemen had scarcely seen their commander's head upon the pike, when their brutal courage sunk into dismay, and they had no more strength than children. They immediately took to flight with doleful lamentations, leaving in our possession the whole caravan, which consisted of a hundred camels loaded with valuable Asiatic merchandise, a numerous flock of sheep, and a number of baggage and provision horses. Besides, we took prisoners ten Bukharian merchants, with fifty drivers and twenty slaves.

Our antagonists had hardly gone out of sight, when we proceeded on our march, directing our way to some friendly *aools* to avoid pursuit. Arsalan had no opportunity to speak with me during the affray; but on the march he took me by the hand, and turning to

his horsemen, said,—“ Here is the man to whom I am indebted for my life, and you for your victory and booty ! He is now free, but his services are above all reward.” My comrades surrounded me, and overloaded me with thanks and caresses. One of our *ci-devant* poets, of whom there are a number among the Kirgheez, immediately composed a song in my praise. My comrades got it by heart, and sang it in chorus during the time of our march. We went at a very quick rate, and frequently changed our direction, in order to avoid pursuit. In ten days time we returned to our *aool*, exhausted with fatigue after our splendid victory. The whole *aool* came out to meet us, and received us with loud acclamations of joy. Arsalan related my prowess to the whole assembly. The elated Kirgheez took me from off my horse, and carried me in their arms round our encampment, with songs and music, singing impromptu verses and songs in my honour. Three *yoorts* were allotted to me, and I was allowed the privilege of selecting for my wives the first Kirgheezian beauties. I did not avail myself of this particular favour ; but I confess I was so well pleased with the honours shewn me, that I thought of remaining altogether among the Kirgheez.

In a few days they began to divide the booty. All the silk stuffs, pearls, and other valuables, were laid aside to be sold in Russia ; but the money was to be applied to the common use of the *aool*, except some things which were divided amongst a family, as well as such things as cattle, horses, and camels. Ready-money and the prisoners were divided only amongst

the horsemen who were in the expedition. The Bukharian merchants were allowed the privilege of ransoming themselves. By the general consent, I was allowed four shares of the booty, and granted the privilege of choosing four prisoners for my service. In the number of the prisoners taken by us, who were mostly Persians and Afghauns, there were two Russians. Of course, I took them for my share, in order to grant them their liberty on the first opportunity.

Amidst the cares of our hurried march, I had not an opportunity of attending much to my countrymen ; and even had not time to question them particularly about their condition. I learned only that one of them was a gentleman, and the other a disbanded soldier. When they came into my hands, I lodged them in my tent, and the same evening invited them to sup with me, to learn particularly every thing which related to them. One of them was a man of about five and thirty, of a manly appearance, and handsome features. Notwithstanding his long beard and hair, his face seemed familiar to me. The disbanded soldier, a man of five and forty, was easy in his manner, and active. " Who are you, my dear countryman ?" enquired I of the first. " I am a gentleman and retired officer." " What is your family name ?" " Meloveeden." " Alexander Ivanoveetch Meloveeden," exclaimed I, leaping from my seat and clasping him in my arms. " How do you know me," asked he in amazement. " Do I know you ! I am astonished that I did not recognise you at first sight. But you are grown older and altered in your appearance, and you are thinner,

and besides, that beard, those rags ! Alexander Ivano-veetch, look at me. Do you not know your orphan, your Vanky, whom you took with you from Gologordoffsky's house, and left with the Jew at Sloneem ? What a strange fate !" We wept for joy, and embraced one another in silence. The disbanded soldier stood at some paces from us, and wiped off his tears with the back of his hand. At last we grew composed, and, after sending the soldier to the other tent, I remained alone with Meloveeden in order to tell him my adventures.

Meloveeden, after hearing me to an end, was glad that I had been so well brought up, and so situated in the world that I might now be his friend and companion. The same evening we mutually bound ourselves not to separate, but that the one should be partaker of the other's fortune whatever it might be. From that minute we agreed to *thee* and *thou* one another, and call ourselves brethren. As it was already late, we lay down to sleep, and Meloveeden promised me next day to relate his adventures. We rose at break of day, and Meloveeden began his narrative. Here I ought to let my readers know that every thing formerly detailed concerning Gologordoffsky and his family, every thing that was said about love, marriage, and Meloveeden's connection with this family, was drawn by me from this narrative, and thrown back according to its natural arrangement into the first chapters of my auto-biography. It must of course be understood that I was so little and simple while in Gologordoffsky's house, that I was not ca-

pable of understanding all that I have there detailed so particularly. And so I shall here begin with Meloveeden's departure from Sloneem to Moscow with his young wife.

CHAPTER XVI.

Meloveeden's narrative.—A living automaton and his house-keeper.—An old maid's family.—Panorama of Moscow society. A friendly quadrille.—Russian foreigner.—Company at the watering places.—Glance at Venice.

“ON arriving at Moscow with an intention to make my peace with my uncle, and procure assistance from him, I for some days kept out of sight of my acquaintances, and by means of an old friend of my father, endeavoured to come to terms with my former benefactor. But my uncle sternly refused to see me. All the exertions of my friend to bring us together proved unsuccessful. The reason of this unaccountable misunderstanding was this. My uncle who was a cold-blooded man, easy-tempered towards every body, heavy and lazy, was a slave to his habits. He had served thirty years on end in one of the courts of law, where his only employment consisted in writing at the bottom of papers—“Faithfully copied from the original, Stephen Meloveeden.” Almost every evening he spent at the English club-house, where his greatest delight consisted in drinking cranberry lemonade, playing at whist, and hearing scandal, which he, on his return home, repeated to his house-directress, Avdotya Ivanovna. This woman, the widow

of a retired College-registrar,* had hired twenty years before this, lodgings in the same house with my uncle ; and learning at one time that he was dangerously ill, and that there was nobody to attend to him but his servants, took forcible possession of his apartments, with the assistance of the *Kvartalny Nadzeerat*, (Police-Inspector,) reduced to submission his servants, quarrelled with the sick man and the doctor, and in the meantime did not leave my uncle's bedside—poured medicine down his throat, and plagued him till he grew well. Either from gratitude or pusillanimity, he had not the spirit to expel Avdotya Ivanovna from his lodgings ; and seeing her blustering attachment to himself, and her bustling activity in the management of the house, he left at her disposal every thing which related to domestic affairs. My uncle became soon sensible of the superior excellence of female housewifery, in comparison with the domestic economy of an old bachelor. His linen was all in order, his tea and coffee tasted better, and at the end of every meal, there was always one of his favourite dishes. Habit soon had such a powerful influence over my uncle, that he could do nothing without Avdotya Ivanovna, and every thing which was not made ready by her, or came not through her hands appeared to him disagreeable. The broad, Calmuck, pock-pitted face of Avdotya Ivanovna, could certainly have no charms for my uncle, but it had worn so into his good graces, that he could not help every day staring in her cat's eyes, like a mag-

* The lowest rank in the civil service.

pie in a mirror. His ears were as accustomed to her shrill voice, as those of an old soldier to the beat of the drum : and he would not sleep comfortably if he did not hear her in the course of the day, scolding the servants, neighbours, and pedlars.* The laziness and supineness of my uncle had need of some excitement, and Avdotya Ivanovna had soon such a dominion over him, that he was in her hands a complete automaton, and did not dare even to arrange his night-cap without her advice, patiently heard her abusive harangues, and did every thing with her permission, except subscribing, “faithfully copied from the original.” My uncle thought himself fortunate in having found a being, who thought for him, wished for him, feared for him, and hoped for him. He with pleasure committed his property to the disposal of Avdotya Ivanovna, merely to avoid the trouble of having to do with starosts, † stewards, and creditors, who always wheedled something out of him, besides cheating him. He thanked his stars that Avdotya Ivanovna allowed him to visit the English club, on condition however of bringing her all the scandal ; and it was with fear and trembling that he returned home, when, by attending too closely to cards, he lost the thread of any amusing story, and came home newsless. Another in his place would have invented something to quiet the plaguy vixen ; but my uncle was so unac-

* All the common articles of food and clothing are hawked about in Russia by pedlars. (*raznóshtchecks*.)

† Heads of villages, who when the landlord has no steward on the estate, are employed to collect the revenues.

customed to the exercise of his mental faculties, that he would have taken a three days fit of the meagrum, if he had thought three minutes about any thing else than filling his belly, trumps at whist, and his own “faithfully copied from the original.”

“Avdotya Ivanovna had a daughter by her husband, the late College Registrar. She was in her third year when her mother took up her abode in the same house with my uncle. After this it was a matter of course that she should be educated at my uncle’s expense, and that Avdotya Ivanovna should immediately require her Leeza to speak French, play German airs upon the harpsicord, sing Italian, and dance all manner of foreign dances. Eliza was taught all this for money, but as foreigners do not import wit for sale to us, but merely for home-consumption, Leeza remained a blockhead as God created her.

“My father being a General in actual service, was always with the army. I lost my mother in my infancy, and therefore was brought up till I was ten years of age by a relation of my mother, an old maid, along with a couple of dozens of monkies, parrots, lap-dogs, dwarfs, and all other sorts of rarities. The greatest justice reigned in this menagerie : we were all, that is to say, people and beasts, equally pelted, crammed as much as we could hold, caressed and beaten according to our benefactress’s humour. In general her merry fits came on when she heard of the breaking up of any proposed match, no matter who were the parties, or any piece of scandal about married eople. On the other hand, her fits of ill-nature

came on when she heard about marriages, and happy wedlock. Of course the best season for us was in the time of the fasts, when there are no marriages. In her mirthful days, all of us, viz., lap-dogs, monxies, dwarfs, dwarfesses, and myself, were fed upon sweet biscuits and almonds, and in the days of wrath, we were all whipt with one bunch of rods. We were taken in our turns an airing with her in her carriage, one day myself, another day the monkey, and so on. It is not a foolish saying that ‘equality of condition unites hearts.’ Our man-and-beast society lived in the greatest friendship and concord, except a spiteful Siberian tom-cat,* and an obstinate old monkey, who disturbed the peace of our domestic circle, and for that reason got thumpings from me and the dwarfs, for which we were whipped by our benefactress. I think I would have got upon a friendly footing with the Siberian cat or the monkey, if I had lived longer in that house. But fortunately my father, on his arrival in Moscow, took me from it, having quarrelled with my benefactress, because he had praised before her the connubial state, and had affirmed that he lived happy with my mother. My father spent in the military service a part of his paternal inheritance, but my uncle, while he subscribed, “Faithfully copied from the original,” had increased his property tenfold. He undertook to pay for my education, and to maintain me in the service. I was sent to a French boarding-school in course, and on holidays my uncle permitted me to

* The Siberian cat is of a dark-purple colour, and is much prized in Moscow.

come to dinner with him. Avdotya Ivanovna, to the astonishment of all, not only was not jealous because my uncle divided his benefits between me and her daughter ; but, on the contrary, loved me much, caressed me, gave me presents, and behaved towards me as if I was her son.

“ On my entering the service after my father’s death, Avdotya Ivanovna, besides obliging my uncle to provide me with every thing which I wanted, made him even give me more than he had intended. At last the secret cause of this kindness came out. Avdotya Ivanovna wanted to marry me to her daughter Leeza ; and as soon as I had married another, she made my uncle believe that I had been guilty of the greatest delinquency, shewn myself ungrateful, and at last, by representing me as vicious and ill-principled, got him to disinherit me in legal form. A friend of my father procured me a copy of this ill-fated paper with my uncle’s subscription of “ Faithfully copied from the original.” It was the destination of fate ; for my uncle would sooner have allowed the sun to be extinguished, than his scribbling to be cancelled, as he always regarded the copy to be more important than the original.

“ On hearing of my arrival in Moscow, and my misfortune, some friends of my father united to change my uncle’s resolution. They had recourse to Avdotya Ivanovna, and, by threatening her with Hell and the *Ugolovnaya Paláta*,* succeeded at last in getting

* A criminal court.

Avdotya Ivanovna, before my uncle's face, to agree to give me twenty-five thousand roubles, on condition however that I should make a voluntary renunciation of the whole inheritance, which amounted to a million of roubles.† As I was reduced to extremities, I agreed to every thing, being persuaded that I would make nothing by holding out. The money was told over to me, and I left my uncle in peace, to think with the head and feel with the heart of Avdotya Ivanovna, play at whist, drink cranberry lemonade in the English club, listen to scandal, and subscribe "Faithfully copied from the original."

"You were educated in Moscow, my dear Vejeeghen, but you are not acquainted with that ancient metropolis of our nation; besides, you were young and inexperienced. The rascally perverter of youth Vorovaateen, and the rendezvous for antiquated admirers of the fair sex at your aunt's, are two imperceptible points in the Moscow horizon. With regard to the French boarding-school at which you were, these establishments are as like each other through the whole of Russia, as two sheets of white paper. Petersburg may be compared to a pretty young coquette of the great world, seeking gratification with all the attractions and with all the calculations of refinement. Old mother Moscow, on the contrary, is like a decrepit rich widow, who, after having lived in the great world, has retired to a country town in the interior of Russia, which lies in the centre of her property, in order to play the first

† Upwards of £40,000 sterling.

role in her own neighbourhood, without breaking off however her connexions with the metropolis. Moscow, my dear friend, has out of all manner of exotic fancies and rarities, succeeded in weaving for her own shroud a really original article, in which foreigners may distinguish the yarn of their own spinning, but the body of the tissue and the patterns can be claimed by none but our own dearly beloved Moscow.

“ The best Moscow society is composed in the first place of *the old men*, as they are called, who have overlived their time, and from ennui or other causes have settled in Moscow for a temporary rest, in expectation of an eternal. This respected rank constitutes a living chronicle for the last half century, or rather living quotations from the contemporary history of Russia. The members of this body form also an Areopagus or supreme court for judging of all contemporary occurrences. They hold their sittings at the English club, and at the houses of respectable elderly ladies of the first three classes. The distinction of ranks is observed by them with as great strictness as in a well drilled regiment under arms. Politics, war, the internal administration of the empire, the appointment to public offices, the decisions of courts of law, and particularly the distribution of ranks and orders, are all subject to the review of this croaking Areopagus. It is this class which gives balls, dinners, suppers, and *soirees*, to persons of distinction passing through Moscow, to public functionaries of the first class, and to the first-rate nobility.

“ In the second place—gentlemen in actual service

in the Moscow courts of law, who differ in this only from the public functionaries of Petersburg and other places, that they live more luxuriously, have more inclination for business, and do not take up their time with collateral objects, such as literature and the sciences, as some of our young civilians do in Petersburg.

“ In the third place, sinecurists, or mothers’ darlings ; that is to say the rear-rank of the phalanx covered by blind fortune. Of these lucky people, the greater part cannot read the Psalter printed in the Slavonic character, although they are all included in the list of Russian antiquaries. They go under the name of ‘ *the youth of the Archives*.’ They form our *petites maitres*, fashionables, husbands of all brides, lovers of all women whose nose is not situated on their chin, and who know to pronounce *oui* and *non*. They are the law-givers of the *ton* amongst the Moscow youth, on the promenades, in the theatres and drawing rooms. This rank also furnishes Moscow with philosophers of the last hatch, who are full of every thing to the brim except wholesome thought—*cognoscenti* in rhyming, and desperate judges of rhetoric and the sciences.

“ In the fourth place, an immense drove of all sorts of public men retired from the service, belonging to old families who have attained distinguished ranks, in hunting for which they have spent their property ; some who, with little trouble, live upon cards and their shifts, and some who merely live from hand to mouth upon Moscow hospitality.

“ In the fifth place, provincial landholders who come

to spend the winter in Moscow, to eat up their farm-stock and to have the pleasure of seeing their daughters dance at the assembly of the *noblesse*, or at evening parties, till some bridegroom, attracted by the dowery, (the scent of which talkative aunts know well how to spread,) demands their charming hand, which has known no sort of work from the day of its creation.

“ In the sixth place, gentlemen travellers from Petersburg and the army, in quest of rich brides for which Moscow has been famed from time immemorial. These gentry begin usually at the very top of the ladder, but alight upon *elevees*, or merchants’ daughters, who are surer bargains.

“ These are the chief divisions of our Moscow society, which, notwithstanding their motley nature, constitute a *tout ensemble* like an everlasting masquerade or a Venetian carnival. It would be needless for me to point out to you at present all that is good or bad in this medley. You will see that yourself in time. I may tell you, however, that there are probably no where so many good people, notwithstanding their singularities, as in Moscow.

“ The most prominent feature of Moscow is hospitality, or the propensity for keeping open table. My dear Vejeeghen ! if our planet by any particular misfortune should be subject to a ten year’s scarcity, and supposing provisions were sold for their weight in gold, even then nobody would be starved in Moscow except the *dvorouvey*-servants,* who at other times, amidst

* Household serfs. It would require a separate chapter to de-

the general abundance, are not over well fed, probably that they may be the lighter for work. Although I am no statistical man, I may affirm without hesitation, that more is eaten and drunken in Moscow, during one year, than in the whole of Italy in twice the time. To make their guests eat and drink to excess is esteemed in Moscow the first characteristic of a good *accueil*. To guzzle and swill to a *ne plus ultra* is a sort of pleasure which even well bred people do not deny themselves. But I have entered into too long discussion about our dearly beloved Moscow, and must return to the thread of my story.

“ On receiving the twenty-five thousand roubles, I proceeded with it in exactly the same way as with all the money which ever passed through my hands ; that is to say, I looked only at the beginning of my capital, and would not let my eyes see the other end, for fear I should vex myself at its diminution. I hired a good house, and carriage with four horses, engaged an excellent cook, fixed a particular day in the week for receiving my acquaintances to dine, and spend the evening, and went through the town a visiting. My wife gained in her favour a great party amongst the gentlemen, and I among the ladies. The former found my wife *wonderfully charming*, and the latter called me *amazingly amiable*, and we soon formed acquaintances with the best houses in Moscow, lived like *decent* people, that is to say, we filled others with

scribe the condition of this ill-treated class, many of whom are related to their masters and mistresses by other ties than those of servitude.

meat and drink, and they returned the compliment to us ; we danced when we were asked, dressed, played deep at cards, and consequently contracted debts which we could not pay, &c. &c. &c.!

“Every capital in the hands of a spendthrift has two ends. One end is filled up with pleasures and gratifications, the other, if repentance does not intervene, is characterized by embarrassments which frequently lead to crime. I recollected myself at my last hundred rouble-note, and awoke as it were from a trance at the importunate clamour of my creditors. A ruined man like a troop of horse is always surrounded with a swarm of vermin and bloodsuckers. I was addressed by a number of false gamblers, swindlers, and all sorts of people living on their wits, whose object was to lead me into the snares of iniquity. They proposed to convert my house into a whirlpool of play, expecting that I would be the means of bringing under their clutches people of the higher circles, while my wife being a beauty, would console the losers with tender glances. Others wished to obtain my permission by a consideration of a certain percentage, to make use of my name for dishonest purposes, and the like. I confess I frequently transgressed the rules of strict morality, from thoughtlessness and a propensity for extravagance, but never debased myself by fraud or violating any of the rules of honour. I drove away all my tempters, and resolved —— I resolved upon nothing; only declining to receive company at my house, and pawning my carriage with a coachmaker, I drove about Moscow more than ever, in hopes of stumbling

upon good luck. I begged for time from my creditors, promising to pay them what I was owing whenever my circumstances should mend; and they, seeing they could make nothing of me, consented. Fortunately there was no one amongst them, who, to console himself for the loss of his money, chose to put me into prison, and have the pleasure of boarding me at his own expence.

“ Although my ruin made no great noise, there are however no secrets in Moscow, and the news were soon whispered through all the capital. I have already said that there are in Moscow more good or at least condescending people than any where else. They talked, tittered, criticised, abused, and held their peace.— One of the rich elderly ladies who found me *amazingly agreeable*, made me an offer of her friendship and assistance; while her husband, who reckoned my wife *wonderfully charming*, notwithstanding his age and gout, had a very tender heart, and could not endure with indifference that the fair Petronella should be in want of dress. We accepted of their friendly offer, formed one harmonious family, and again lived like singing birds. My wife dressed finer than ever, and I gave more and better entertainments, played high, and after paying my old debts contracted new ones with much more confidence.

“ The relations of Count and Countess Tzeetereen were much displeased at our intimate friendship, and, in order to draw the old gentleman and lady away from us, begged the doctors to advise them to go to the mineral waters across the frontier, both together,

and to one celebrated spa, thinking that I and my wife, from attachment, would remain in Moscow. But where passion or necessity interferes, the customs of the world lose their power. The old gentleman and lady agreed to go to the mineral waters from a love of life, but proposed to us to go along with them. We gladly accepted their offer. In order to be freed from the annoying friendship of the old Countess on the road, I feigned myself unwell, and in the meantime, while I groaned and limped at home, I sang and jumped about in other places. In Carlsbad we spent the time pretty agreeably. The company at the waters consisted of faded coquettes looking in the waters for their lost freshness; of gamblers; of ministers, and grandees of different courts retired from place and power, who in the beginning of their disgrace usually resort to the mineral waters as a Lethe to obliterate the remembrance of their former consequence; of young married beauties, who in gratitude to a benefactor seek relief from the pangs of conjugal fidelity, at a distance from their home; of young and old mad-caps in quest of adventures through the wide world; and lastly of a multitude of nervous, consumptive, worn-out, sickly people of both sexes, who according to the fashionable way, esteemed dissipation and pleasure the best regimen for the waters, and consequently all, both sick and sound, tried who would play the fool best, for the benefit of the doctors, innkeepers, gamblers, and nymphs.

“I fell into my element, and wearying of the company of my friends, the Count and Countess, made

up to myself out of doors for what I suffered at home. My wife, with whom I in other respects lived very amicably, sought her own amusements, and between us there was neither jealousy nor discontent. But, my dear Vejeeghen, a thoughtless and disgraceful life sooner or later leads to misery—listen and be convinced!

“ Amongst the fair visitors of Carlsbad, I was most captivated with the Countess Sensibili, who had come from Vienna with her two young children to dispel a hypochondria at the mineral waters. Her husband, an Italian nobleman, held a distinguished post in the Austrian possessions in Italy, and could not accompany her. A certain melancholy was diffused over the charming features of the Countess; deep sensibility was expressed in her looks, and communicated to the hearts of those on whom she darted her large black eyes. Having seen her occasionally at the house of an old Austrian Baroness, I sought her acquaintance and received permission to visit her. I considered her an Italian, but fancy my astonishment when I learned she was a Russian Princess, although she did not know a word of her mother tongue. Educated in Petersburg by a Frenchwoman, she, in the house of her parents, who were native Russians, never heard it spoken. In that house a preference was alway shewn to foreigners, and the young Princess from her childhood was accustomed to hear that the Russians were barbarians, and unfit for anything except to be peasants and pedlars, and that foreigners were the only people

from whom the Russians should take an example how to live in the world. The Princess was told that the Russian language was only of use amongst the swinish multitude, and that it was so harsh that a well educated lady might catch a sore throat by pronouncing the sharp Russian terminations. The Princess's gouvernante assured her that she suffered a whole week from the toothache and swelled tongue, in consequence of her exertions in pronouncing the word 'Poschtchetchena,' notwithstanding that it is pronounced so easily by the Russian maid-servants. The unfortunate Princess (for I call her unfortunate, as I reckon all those so who do not know and do not love their native country), was extremely glad when her mother on her husband's death left Russia, and after traversing Europe in all directions, settled in Florence. The old lady married there a young French *bourgeois*, for whom she bought the title of Count, where it is a marketable article. In her fifteenth year the Princess Malania was also married to Count Sensibili, and our country-woman soon inured to Italian customs, forgot even the existence of Russia. Ten years after her marriage, she was seized with a hypochondria, arising, it would appear, from a surfeit of the conjugal state ; she went to dispel it to Vienna, and from thence to Carlsbad, where I paid her particular attention, and did all I could to convince her that the Russians are capable of loving as tenderly, powerfully, and passionately as the Italians and French, and succeeded in reconciling her to her country. She even began to learn Russian, and found

that the word "*looblyoo*"* was extremely tender and agreeable to the ear.

"The Countess Sensibili was obliged to go and join her husband at Venice. I begged the Countess and Count Tzeetereen to go and winter there. In that city I passed the time very agreeably, visiting every day the dear Countess Sensibili under the *nom de guerre* of a teacher of the Russian language. I did not choose to pass in her house under my own name, for in that case I would have had to introduce Count Sensibili to our family circle, and bring the Countess thither, which might have broken up our friendly quadrille. I was also in the practice of meeting with the Countess Sensibili at the house of an old female friend of hers and at all the public amusements, which, in Venice, are numerous. I shall say a few words about that city.

"The once proud Venice no longer infested with the politics and caprices of its aristocracy, after losing its strength and riches, has not given up its passion for amusements: on the contrary it has become the rallying point of dissipation and pleasure. In Paris and London a man is diverted from the pleasures of sense, by politics and the sciences, which are practically illustrated and form the subjects of common conversation. In Venice, with the exception of music which disposes the mind for receiving tender impressions, other pleasures are not known, but coquetry and love intrigues. Love is the atmosphere of Venice, and foreigners come thither from distant shores and inhale the air of that

* I love.

modern Paphos. Nowhere do the females enjoy so much freedom as in Venice. With a slight covering they issue boldly forth into the coffee-houses and the Casino, and mingle amongst the crowd in the square of St. Mark, in the garden of St. George's Monastery, or on the new Quay. Women are not attended by their husbands but by their *cavalieri serventi*, who perform the same duty to the Venetian ladies as an active adjutant to the young wives of old generals ; that is to say, a serving cavalier must be in constant attendance upon his lady from morning to night, if she does not think proper to take another companion for part of the time. You know that Venice is built on lagoons of the sea and that there canals serve instead of streets, and covered boats or gondolas in place of carriages. These gondolas are floating temples of love, and coffins of conjugal fidelity. The famed jealousy of the Italians vanishes before Hymen's torch, and changes into smoke and vapour, which only forms into hail when a wife's conduct threatens to empty her husband's pocket. In Venice there is no idea of hospitality. There all the inhabitants meet together only in the Casino, in the coffee-houses, squares, or theatre : they treat one another only to ice, chocolate, and very rarely to a dinner, and leave visiting cards at one another's doors.—In general the Italians are not created either for soft converse or for modest domestic life. The greatest happiness of life is with them *far niente*,* and their very pleasures and promenadings they call work. It

* To do nothing.

is unnecessary to tell you that there are no rules without exceptions. I lived in Venice as if I were in paradise for about a year, when one day ——." The voice of Arsalan Sultan was suddenly heard, calling me to him, and Meloveeden's narrative was interrupted in the meantime.

CHAPTER XVII.

The resolution of the Kirgheezyan elders, with reference to my reward.—The continuation of Meloveeden's story.—Duel.—Flight.—The renegade Jew.—Residence in Constantinople.—What is Pera?—Deceit.—Slavery.—Deliverance.

“MY dear Ivan!” said Arsalan Sultan to me, “we have decided your fate in a council of the elders. I know you are melancholy about your country, and, if you remain with us it is only from love to me. Go, in God's name, Ivan! Here is what we have resolved upon with regard to you.” Arsalan took out of his bosom a little scrap of paper, which was wrapped up in several handkerchiefs, as if it were the greatest rarity, and read as follows:—“1. The prisoner of the invincible, free, and famous Kirgheez nation, Ivan Vejeeghen, is set at liberty for his great services to the distinguished tribe of Baganálee Keaptchak, and for saving the valuable life of Arsalan Sultan.—2. The free Ivan Vejeeghen is declared a son of the noble and excellent branch of Baganálee Keaptchak. If the said Ivan Vejeeghen, looking with the eyes of wisdom, should think of returning to the blessed and best country in the world, the Kirgheezyan *steppe*, in that case every father of a family must receive him into his *yoort* as if he were his own son, and every Kirgheezyan warrior as his brother, and every Kirgheezyan maid as her

bridegroom or husband, according to the pleasure of the said Ivan Vejeeghen.—3. The whole excellent tribe of *Baganálee Keptchak* is bound to feed and clothe Ivan Vejeeghen and heat his *yoort*, till such time as he shall have grown-up children of his own, or shall himself, of his own accord, give up the privilege granted to him.—4. All the booty belonging to Ivan Vejeeghen as well as his horses and camels, the elders take upon them to sell on the first opportunity either at Orenburg or at some of the Russian fortresses on the frontier, and to remit him the money whithersoever he shall order it. In the meantime they have collected a thousand ducats for his present use, and given him twelve bales of the most valuable merchandise, which shall be delivered to him immediately.—5. Ivan Vejeeghen has a right to take out of the *steppe* with him his Russian slaves, and shall receive a convoy and military escort to the frontiers.”

“Are you satisfied with our award?” said Arsalan. In place of an answer I threw myself about his neck, and burst into tears. At the mere remembrance of my native Russia all my vain glory evaporated like smoke, and I resolved immediately to set off. “When do you think of leaving us?” enquired Arsalan. “Tomorrow,” replied I, holding down my eyes, as if I were ashamed of my ingratitude. “Then I shall make every thing ready for your departure,” said Arsalan, and immediately called to him some of the elders.—Not to interrupt them I went away to my *yoort*.

When I made known to Meloveeden that we were to set off next day for Russia, he could hardly contain

himself for joy ; he wept, laughed, leaped, sang, and at last composed himself, thanked God with tears for his deliverance, and called me his benefactor. “Vejeeghen !” said Meloveeden clasping me to his breast, “you have restored me to my country and to freedom ; but this heart will be always devoted to you. I am yours for ever !” The disbanded soldier was no less rejoiced for his deliverance from infidels, and begged me to retain him in my service, seeing that he had neither a hole nor corner of his own in all Russia.

After breakfasting upon mutton roasted on the coals, and drinking *brag*,* I begged Meloveeden to finish his narrative.

“One day,” continued Meloveeden, “when I left the house accompanied by my servant, in order to take an airing in a gondola along the shore, a boy gave me a note and hid himself. I supposed that it was a *billet doux*, and made haste to read it. But for once I was disappointed. The note was written in Russian, and these were the contents :—

“If you have but a drop of Russian noble blood remaining in you, and if your honour is not completely tarnished in the career of debauchery, shew your face to-morrow morning at twelve o’clock, on *terra firma* at the Sun Tavern, on the banks of the Brenta with a pair of pistols, without letting any one at home know of this. You will know who I am, on the spot, where one of us must fall.”

* A sweetish half-fermented liquor made from rye-malt, of the colour and consistence of porter.

“ Unable to guess from whom this challenge might be, I however resolved to appear at the appointed hour, and immediately went to a friend of mine an Englishman to ask him to be my second. Crossing in my gondola to St. Mark’s Square, I entered a coffee-house under the arcade, hoping to find my friend there, and at the door received another letter in the French language of the following contents :—“ One of us must fall that the other may be happy. To-morrow, at three o’clock in the afternoon, I shall wait you with a sword on *terra firma* at the Swan Tavern on the banks of the Brenta. We are acquaintances, and I have no occasion to subscribe my name, as when we meet, you will know whom you have to do with.”

“ Two duels in one day is no joke ! Notwithstanding that I knew how to handle a sword, and that I was reckoned a pretty good marksman when in the army, I could not help being agitated on receiving of a sudden two challenges. People may think as they please, yet it is any thing but agreeable to be either killed or a killer. I conjectured that it was my gallantry which had brought me into this disagreeable predicament, but could not make out what occasion could arm an unknown fellow-countryman against me. The Englishman not only consented to be my second, but was glad with the thoughts of being a spectator of two deadly encounters. He confessed to me that the national distemper, the spleen, had begun to torment him, and that he had merely on that account undertaken his travels through Europe, in order to meet

with more opportunities of becoming acquainted with death and spurning at life.

“I spent the whole day with the Englishman. He endeavoured to check his spleen, and I to drown my sorrows, in wine : we returned home very late. Next morning I went to the Englishman’s with my weapons, and we set off immediately to the place of rendezvous, in order that we might have time to breakfast before death.

“About twelve o’clock in the morning we sallied forth into the main road, expecting to see our antagonist. An Italian of a friendly exterior came up to us, and asked which of us was called Meloveeden. After that, he proposed to us to take a walk in the park where my adversary awaited me.

“At the extremity of a thicket I found my countryman, who was walking backwards and forwards with hasty paces on a small plot of sward. I made up to him, and raising my hat, said : “My good Sir ! I have not the honour of knowing you, and consequently could not intentionally offend you. It seems to me that it would be but reasonable that we should come to some explanation before engaging.” “That is not at all necessary,” replied my countryman : “the injury done me by you is of such a sort that it is impossible to efface it. You have also no occasion to know my name. It is sufficient to say that I am a Russian nobleman, and an officer, and have come here purposely to fight you. Please to take your station and fire. But recollect that, if you wish to act a magnanimous

part, you will save me the trouble of shooting you, by doing it yourself. The terms of the duel are to be, that our seconds are to measure out fifteen paces, and we on the signal being given, shall be free either to fire at once from our stance, or one of us allowing his adversary to fire, may approach a pace nearer and fire upon the other, presenting the pistol to his head." "That is not duelling, but murdering," exclaimed I. "What! Are you become a poltroon already, you rascal," said my antagonist roughly. "If you attempt to avoid your fate by cowardice, I will immediately blow out your brains." He followed up the word by the deed, and fell upon me like a madman, pistol in hand; and if the Englishman had not succeeded in wresting it from him, he would probably have shot me dead on the spot. My blood boiled within me. "I will shew you my poltroonery," exclaimed I, and immediately took my post. The signal was given, I cocked, drew the trigger, and my adversary fell weltering in his blood before he got time to fire. I flew to his assistance, and to learn his name, and the cause of his hatred towards me. But he screamed out roughly for me to be off, and not pollute by my presence the last minutes of his life. His second, also, did not chuse to answer my questions, and begged us to retire. I returned with the Englishman to the tavern, confounded at this incomprehensible occurrence, and resolved to wait for the other appointment without returning to the city. About the time already fixed, we went to the other tavern where we also found a second. He conducted me into a room,

where, to my greatest astonishment, I found Count Sensibili. "Your lessons in the Russian language, said he, addressing himself to me, have had such an effect upon my wife, that she has taken a fancy to uplift her share of our property, and along with our children to set off for Russia. I therefore have resolved, Mr. Professor, to give you a lesson of another sort. I might arm against you mercenary assassins, as other husbands are wont to do here ; but being in the military service, I follow other rules : so I wish to do myself the pleasure of dispatching you in person, for the injury you have done me—I know all." "I shall not say a word of the injury," said I ; "but if you suppose that I have instigated your wife to leave you and set off for Russia, I assure you that you are completely mistaken, and that this is the first time I have heard such a report." "Enough Sir, enough," replied the Count. "Do not set off with a lie your double deceit, with your wife——and - - - but I came not here to explain. Let us go into the garden." There was no alternative, and I was obliged to fight, sword in hand, with the unfortunate husband.

"At first I endeavoured merely to parry my opponent's thrusts or give him a slight wound to put a stop to the fray ; but the Count closed so violently upon me, and made such furious attempts to dispatch me, that I grew heated myself, and fell upon my antagonist in good earnest. In desperation he attempted to get hold of my sword, and fastened upon me. But the point of my sword penetrated his breast, and he fell insensible on the ground.

“ With the Englishman’s assistance, I carried the wounded man to the tavern, sent for a doctor, and, leaving the Count to the care of his second, hastened into the city. On arriving at home, I met my wife, who gave me to understand that the Count and Countess Tzeetereen had shut themselves up in their rooms and were in the greatest distress ; that the Count had refused to see the charming Petronella, and the Countess had given orders not to admit me into her apartment, and wished us to remove into other lodgings. My wife learned from the valet, that the Count’s son, formerly a Captain in a hussar regiment, of whom we knew nothing before this time, had come privately to Venice, was mortally wounded in a duel, and in the agonies of death had written his parents such a letter, that the Countess fainted three times, fell into hysterics and a nervous paroxysm, while the Count experienced a violent attack of the gout and a sort of paralysis. I immediately guessed that my irreconcilable countryman was the Count’s son, but concealed my suspicions from my wife. In half an hour I received a letter from the Countess Sensibili, in which she reproached me for the death of the father of her children, called me a monster and a murderer, and forbade me to appear before her eyes. In despair I flew to my friend the Englishman, and there learned that the authorities were in search of the murderers of Count Sensibili and of a foreign traveller, and that, if I should not get across the frontiers before evening, I would be arrested and shut up in prison. I returned home, collected all my ready money and valuables,

wrote a letter to my wife in which I informed her of every thing that had happened, and advised her to return home to her father's and wait me there. After that, I hired a gondola and rowed out to the roads.

“ A Genoese vessel was unmooring in order to take advantage of the favourable wind, to sail for Constantinople. The captain whom I had treated the day before in the coffee-house, agreed to take me with him without asking for my passport. At nine o'clock in the evening I was already on the open sea. The tears flowed from my eyes at the thoughts of my unhappy wife whom I had never ceased to love, and whom I, by my own giddiness, and to speak the truth, libertinism, had led into temptation. But now there was no remedy, and though my heart was ready to burst, I resolved to bear my misfortunes with firmness. Repentance harrowed up my soul, and I swore I would reform.

“ Amongst the passengers there was a Turk. He spoke French and Italian very well, and perceiving my melancholy, endeavoured to divert me with his conversation. He was about fifty years of age, had travelled much in Europe and Asia, had been in Egypt, and had acquired much experience by reading and observation. He acquainted me that he was a Hamburgh Jew, had studied medicine at Leyden, and in the thirteenth year of his age, being at Constantinople, had resolved to change his persuasion for the Mahomedan, from pure conviction, without any interested motives. Not being accustomed to dispute about religion, I paid no attention to his reasonings upon that

subject ; but observing that he entered upon it more frequently, and sang loudly the praises of Islamism, I declared to him resolutely, that, if he wished to continue on friendly terms with me, he should never speak upon that subject. The renegade complied with my wishes, and confined his panegyrics after this to the Turkish government, to which I listened with patience, merely in order to get some knowledge of the manners and customs of the Turks. Above all, he extolled the honesty of the followers of Mahomet, their adhesiveness to their word, and affirmed that Islamism had cured himself of the natural propensities of the Israelites, who, in his opinion, have never ceased to worship the golden calf, though in a different form.

“ We had a prosperous voyage, and soon arrived at the harbour of Constantinople. I removed to Pera, to an Italian who kept a sort of lodging-house. On unpacking my portmanteau, I almost fainted when I found that my money and valuables were gone. I flew in despair to the master of the vessel, and told him of the robbery. He vouched for the honesty of his crew, but would not answer for the passengers. “ If you had committed the money and things to my keeping, that misfortune would not have happened to you,” said he. “ At present you have only yourself to blame. I am not a rich man myself, and can give you but little assistance. But here are ten ducats for you ; you will repay me when you are able.” With a sore heart I returned to the lodging-house, and on the way met with my acquaintance the renegade, to whom I related my misfortune—“ Mahomet commands us to succour

the needy, not only of our own faith, but all good people," said he. "I reckon you to be so, and offer you board and lodging at my house gratis : otherwise, if you should be in funds at any future time, I shall not refuse to accept of payment. But at present there is no occasion to enlarge upon that. Take your baggage out of the tavern, and I will conduct you to my house." I did not know how to thank the renegade for his generous offer, and immediately availed myself of it. The Porte was then at war with Russia, and therefore we had no ambassador. I told no one that I was a Russian, but called myself a Slavonian from *Bocca di cataro*. In the coffee-houses of Pera, I formed some acquaintances among the christian inhabitants of Constantinople, which contributed to my diversion and even to my subsistence. In the renegade's house I scarcely saw any body, and he rarely spoke to me, being continually occupied with business. I had my victuals brought me into my own little room ; but the bread of charity was not only bitter but very deficient in weight. My daily allowance of *pillav* was not more than a physician would have prescribed to keep me from dying of famishment ; and if I had not got assistance from the Greeks, I would certainly have pined away for want of nourishment.

"How can living in Constantinople please a man of education and sensibility ? The Europeans have hardly any direct intercourse with the Turks, who in their pride and ignorance despise all Christians, and only vouchsafe to receive them into their company, when they anticipate some advantage from their ac-

quaintance. In addition to this, the routine of Turkish life keeps them at a distance from Europeans. The Mahomedan, if not engaged in the service of government, spends the greater part of his life in his harem, and knows no other pleasure than that of smoking his pipe and drinking coffee in a coffee-house, looking at the end of his nose, and listening to the lucubrations of the coffee-house babblers or story-tellers who constitute a class of themselves. The Turks are very sparing of words, and only voluble when they abuse the Franks, that is Europeans, and all Giaours particularly *Rayas* or the Christian subjects of the Porte. Sometimes the Sultan himself gets a share of it, particularly when he undertakes any reform, which is always regarded as an encroachment on Islam. In the coffee-houses, under the very gates of the Seraglio, they abuse the Sultan, who could at a nod cut off their heads, with as great boldness as in Europe our opposition Journals attack the ministry. In other respects, the monotonous life of the Turks and their ignorance can afford the European no pleasure in their company, and, if travellers occasionally seek to form their acquaintance, it is from mere curiosity, to fill their note-books with semifictitious stories.

“ All the business both political and commercial of Constantinople is managed by the Perotes or inhabitants of the suburb called Pera, which forms not only a division of the town, but a separate kingdom, a separate people ! Here live the descendants of Europeans, Italians, (mostly Venetians,) Illyrians, and other southern Slavonians, Catholic Armenians, a small

number of French, and still less English and Germans. The Perotes may pride themselves upon the circumstance of their ancestors being on an equal footing with the first founders of Rome in the time of Romulus, with this difference, that the founders of Rome gained a subsistence by force of arms, and openly robbed on the high-way, while the ancestors of the Perotes attained the same end by less violent means. "The Perotes can claim this distinction before the Romans, that they have not changed the customs of their ancestors.

The carelessness of the Turkish police in looking after Europeans, has brought to Constantinople knights of industry, and bankrupts of all nations, who have taken up their residence in Pera, under the protection of the standard of Mahomet. The language of the Perotes is an Italian made up of all the dialects of Italy, with a mixture of Turkish, Greek, and Slavonian words pronounced in a peculiar way. Their ignorance of every thing regarding the arts and sciences is on a parallel with that of the Turks; but their finesse makes up for all their deficiencies, and a knowledge of languages constitutes all their wisdom. The children, while they are hardly able to lisp, are taught to speak Turkish, Greek, French, and Italian. This is the means of conducting the Perotes to riches and honours, putting into their hands all the diplomatic affairs of the Porte; for it is from them that the Dragomans or Tolmatches are selected for the European missions. It may be easily conjectured with what fidelity they serve the Europeans, when it is plain as day-light that a Perote knows nothing in the world more excellent

than his own dirty Pera, nothing more majestic than a Turk, nothing wiser or mightier than the Sultan, and nothing worse than all nations and all people who do not profess the Roman Catholic faith, or have not the honour of being Mussulmen. The ambition of a Perote does not go farther than the place of Dragoman, and the only object of his life is the accumulation of money. They also take up the calling of trading-consuls and brokers, and after growing rich by the help of commerce and roguery, set up for bankers. The Perotes hate the Greeks, and do them all the harm they can when they have it in their power, being afraid lest they should take the trade out of their hands. The Greeks hate the Roman Catholics, merely because they are of the same persuasion as the Perotes. Among the Greeks, to call any one a Perote is synonymous with the term Jesuit among us. The European travellers and official people belonging to the different embassies, have more intercourse with the Perotes owing to the similarity of their mode of living to the European, and to the facility of communication without the use of the Eastern languages. The women act a leading part in the Perote community. Their whole occupation consists in sitting, during summer, the whole day on a sofa, and in winter at a *tandoor*. This *tandoor* is a sort of low square table, covered with a wadded quilt, and on the top with green cloth. Under the table there is a brazier with burning charcoal, which gives heat to the honourable company who are seated on small sofas around the *tandoor*, hiding their feet under the table, and covering themselves up

to the waist with the coverlet. There are no stoves or chimneys, as you may be aware, in Constantinople. At these *tandoors*, they play cards, talk scandal, praise the Sultan when he cuts off the heads and confiscates the property of his subjects who have not the honour to be Perotes, and carry on love intrigues by handing *billets doux* under the coverlets. The Perote females are distinguished for their propensity to love-adventures, and most of them assist their husbands, brothers, and fathers in their struggles for preferment and wealth, and in the discovery of political secrets. Owing to the want of a polished European community, the foreign envoys invite the Perote ladies to their balls and routes, and these ladies constitute the great world of Constantinople, in proportion to their means and connections.

“ A Greek acquaintance introduced me among the Perotes ; but as I had no money, and did not wish to try more experiments in love, I met with but a dry reception. I had myself but little pleasure in a society where I found no food either for the mind or the heart. Among the Greeks I found more sincerity, more intellect, and more politeness, than among the Perotes. The Grecian females are almost all beauties, while, on the contrary, among the Perotes beauty is very rare. The wives and daughters of the Greek Boyars or descendants of the ancient Greek families, are distinguished for their personal and mental charms ; but they do not appear in European society, as the Perotes do all they can to keep them out of the way. The Armenians, being entirely occupied in trade and the exchange and transfer of money, live according to their

own fashions. The Jews, as they are everywhere, are rag-dealers, barbers, retail shopkeepers, errand-runners, and rogues, except some rich jewellers who are distinguished for cheating in the wholesale way.—The Turkish police keeps a sharp look out upon every thing relating to trade and civil order, as far as they contribute to the peace and exigencies of a Mussulman's life. To the affairs and proceedings of the Franks it does not pay the smallest attention, till a complaint be lodged for roguery or murder ; but even then it allows the guilty to buy themselves off. Owing to this, there is not in the whole world such a rendezvous for rogues as at Constantinople. It is their mother-country, and more astonishing than all that, with the exception of the officers of the European embassies and casual travellers, the honestest people in Constantinople are the infidels, that is to say, the Turks.

“ I spent four months in Constantinople very miserably, not knowing what to resolve upon, when, on a sudden, it was reported that the plague had appeared in some quarters of the town. Knowing that it is a difficult matter for a poor man, and especially a Christian to take precautions against infection, and not wishing to be its victim, I intended to leave Constantinople for the islands of the Archipelago or for Russia. A friend of mine assured me that I, being a son of the eastern church, would be received with open arms in the islands which follow the Greek persuasion, but dissuaded me from seeking an asylum among the Roman Catholic Greeks. I mentioned this intention to my landlord ; but he opposed it strongly. “ You do not

know the Greeks," said he to me. "Self interest is their only God, which they continually worship, and bickerings and disagreements are their only occupation. Without money you will be received like a beggar, though gifted with all the talents in the world. Listen to me—I have been long thinking of your condition, and have at last succeeded in finding a situation for you. There is a Persian merchant here, one of the richest capitalists in the East. He wants an European clerk for his trade. Throw aside your nobility for a season, and serve with a merchant. In five or six years, you will have become a *millionaire* yourself: return to your native country, throw your mantle of *noblesse* again about your shoulders, and live after the manner of your caste, pouring emptiness into vacuity." After thinking a little, I agreed to the renegade's proposal, and next day we arranged to go to the Persian.

"The Persian spoke a little Russian, and had been on some occasions in Moscow and Petersburg. "I want a man who knows the French and Italian languages," said the Persian; "but so much the better that in addition to that, you understand the Russian. Make ready to-morrow for setting off with my caravan. If you behave yourself well, you will have a good life of it with me." I wished to know upon what terms the merchant was to receive me into his service; but the renegade dissuaded me by the insinuation that I would spoil all the business by an appearance of selfishness. "In all countries not civilized like Europeans," added he in French, "the merchants do not pay a fixed yearly salary to their clerks, but give them a share of the

profit. You should not shew yourself avaricious ; on the contrary, you should rejoice only in your employer's advantages, as if you did not think of your own. Then the merchant will give you a share, and you will become his partner. But till such time as he knows you and loves you, you should go to work assiduously, as is the way in the east between masters and servants. Resolve, my dear friend, to put up with some little temporary disgusts, in order to insure your happiness for the remainder of your days. You told me yourself, that you had no means of subsistence in your own country, and that, besides, you had no hope of ever attaining riches there. It does not answer to live for ever at another man's expence, and it is best of all to be indebted only to yourself for your income." The words of the renegade, " It does not answer to live at another man's expence," made me decide, whatever it should cost. The same evening I removed to the Persian's quarters at a *caravanserai*, and next day we set off. I shall not describe to you either the towns or the countries through which we passed, nor the customs of the various Asiatic tribes whom I saw on my journey : that would take up too much time. I may describe all that I saw in a few words—ignorance, roughness, rudeness of manners, constitute the leading qualities of those nations, with the only difference, that in the Asiatic towns where trade flourishes, effeminacy and pusillanimity occupy the place of love to acquaintance, and the arts and refinements of luxury, and that the nomade tribes of Asia, on the contrary, are distinguished for their wild bravery and open robbe-

ry. My dear friend, among Europeans there are people who exclaim against civilization ! let them look at Asia-Minor, and compare its present state with what it was under the rule of the wise caliphs, the lovers and protectors of civilization. Ignorance degrades humanity to the condition of an irrational animal, and the most ravenous creatures on the face of the earth are a half civilized people, who, having advanced only one step beyond savages, have learned only one letter in the great book of civilization, and take words for things, and things for words. It is only selfish culprits who can wish for ignorance, in order to take advantage of the obscurity, to get rid of their vamped-up wares and base money. But, my dear friend, I cannot give you a better illustration of the advantage of civilization, than the following anecdote which has been impressed on my memory since my childhood.

“ For what end do you set a-going academies and schools, and disseminate the sciences ?” said the Vizier Moozafer to the Caliph Haroun al Raschid. “ Don’t you think that the people, once they are instructed, will more easily get the better of you ?” “ Certainly ;” replied the Caliph, “ the instructed people will be better able to judge of the justice of my laws and the purity of my intentions.” “ But will they pay the taxes better ?” “ Certainly ; they will find more means in their enlightened state to attain riches, and will, besides, comprehend that I do not ask more than what is absolutely necessary.” “ Will they fight your wars better ?” “ Much better, when they comprehend that the happiness of every family depends upon the

welfare and glory of their country ; and, besides, they will fight more successfully under the guidance of able commanders.” “ But will not your wise men, your philosophers, think of meddling in the affairs of government ? Will they not venture to notice the errors of your administration ? ” “ Let them seek for them, find them, and tell me of them ; I will be more upon my guard in the future, and govern them all the better.” “ How, would you, oh light of the world ! allow your wise-acres to speak boldly every thing which might come into their head ? ” “ If I did not, they could not enlighten us.” “ But cannot the wisest man fall into mistakes ; may they not set up error for truth ? ” “ One will fall into a mistake, and the other will perceive it and correct it.” “ My Lord ! I must at last warn you of the consequences of all this ; as soon as your people are instructed, some daring spirits will venture to criticize the proceedings of your favourites, of those who enjoy your confidence, and withal of me, even of *me myself* ! ” “ I understand you,” said the Caliph, and left the room. This allegory I would have written up in letters of gold on some public monument, for the conviction of bigots and rogues who wish for the increase of ignorance, in order that they may catch fish in muddy water. It were to be wished that all legislators had before their eyes the example of Haroun al Raschid, who, by spreading education among the rude people of Asia, gained strength, riches, and glory. Civilization departed from Asia, and the empire departed from the Caliphs !

“ A number of merchants and travellers united them-

selves with us in order that they might proceed with greater safety ; for, in the countries of ignorance, there is no possibility of travelling without an escort of armed men. We hired a guard from town to town. My employer appointed me to superintend the caravan, and behaved towards me very civilly, and quite on a footing of equality. But as soon as we arrived within the Persian dominions, he informed me that I was his slave, and that he had bought me from the renegade Jew. It was to no purpose that I told him, the renegade had no right to sell me, because I was never taken prisoner, but came to Constantinople of my own accord, as a traveller, under the protection of the laws and rights of nations. The Persian explained to me, that there was now war between the Turks and Russians ; that the renegade knew that I was a Russian, consequently it was lawful for every Turk to take a Russian captive wherever it might be ; and besides that, I was owing the renegade for board and lodging, more than I would be able to discharge all my life. “ You made no bargain with the renegade,” added the Persian ; “ consequently he was at liberty to demand as much as he pleased from you, though it should be a thousand sequins !” To persuade me fully of my slavery, the Persian shewed me a paper which he called the deed of purchase, witnessed by a Cadi in Constantinople. I was obliged to be silent and take the blame to myself ! After passing through the famous Persian cities of Tabreez and Teheran, we arrived at last at the town of Astrabad, where my master had his regular residence, and carried on an extensive trade with Bukharia, Khee-

va, and Russia. He had no occasion for my assistance in business, but appointed me to instruct his son, a boy of twelve years of age, in languages; letting me know at the sametime, that any attempt of mine to escape from my servitude, would be punished with death, while submission without murmuring would be rewarded by good entertainment and civil usage. In reality, I was treated in his house with sufficient humanity, as our country gentlemen who have good tempers behave to their sons' governors or the parish schoolmasters.* One day I was in my master's apartment, when a merchant came to him to buy some articles of gallantry. My master spread out upon the table a number of precious stones, ear-rings and necklaces of European workmanship, and I was quite astonished when I saw among them those very things which had been stolen from me on board the ship.—When the merchant, after having cheapened and examined the things, left the room, I said to the Persian, “Master! among those valuables I see the things which belonged to me. I cannot suspect you of any dishonesty, seeing you were not on board the vessel in which my property was stolen from me. But tell me, if you please, in what way you procured these things?” “I bought them at Constantinople of your old landlord, the renegade Jew,” replied the Persian. “And this is the honesty which the Jew has learned in the Ma-

* The deacon of every parish is the schoolmaster *ex officio* in the Russian Church, and poor people can attain, at his school, a knowledge of reading, writing, and arithmetic, for a very moderate fee.

homedan faith," exclaimed I involuntarily. "Friend!" replied the Persian, "the faith was not to blame, but the man. Take this advice from me. Be on your guard always against a home-bred wolf, and a man whose religious conversion has risen from low motives of self-interest."

"I was more than three years in slavery, and at last resolved to flee, notwithstanding the threats of capital punishment. I formed an acquaintance with a Bukharian merchant, and promised him a high ransom if he would take me to Russia. Fortunately the Bukharian had been in Moscow, and knew my uncle, having sold him some shawls for his housekeeper.—The Bukharian took me with him from Astrabad, and united with the caravan which was on its way to Russia, through the Kirgheezian *steppe*. The remainder you know. I am indebted to you for my freedom. On my return to Moscow I am determined to seek for my wife, and to rid myself completely of two unfortunate weaknesses—raking and extravagance—to return to the service, and gain by my labours, though a poor, yet an honest livelihood." "Amen!" said I; I commend your resolution, and in the meantime we must make ready for our journey."

CHAPTER XVIII.

I quit the Steppe—Another provincial magistrate—Custom-house officers—A lawyer's dinner.

I shall not describe how we took leave of Arsalan Sultan, his family, and the whole *aool*. I shall merely say that from the oblong grey eyes of the Kirgheeze tears dropped much more sincere than those tears which are set off by our mourning-apparel, with *weepers*;* and although neither the farewell of Abelard and Eloisa, nor of Hector and Andromache, nor the friendly expressions of Orestes and Pylades have been translated into the Kirgheezian language, yet the simple expression of adieu by the worthy Arsalan and my companions his horsemen, moved me to the quick. To speak the truth, the Kirgheezian beauties were not a little displeased with me for resolving to leave the *steppe* which was adorned with their charms; but at the last moment, all was forgotten. The old men consoled the rest by repeating, "He will return back to us: you will see that he will return. It is impossible that such a fine youth should like any other place better than the Kirgheezian steppe."

I with Meloveeden went foremost. The old soldier, Niketas Petroff, whom I took into my service,

* Narrow facings of white cambric, attached to the black coats of mourners.

led three camels with our baggage. Thirty light horsemen formed our escort, and followed us at a short distance. The weather was warm, and our ride was very pleasant.

A man of the world with a good heart and sound mind, only knows his real value at a distance from society. Trifling cares, connections, acquaintances, and temptations, withdraw his mind from important objects; and it is only the stroke of misfortune or solitude, which tears away the sorcerous blind from his eyes. "I now feel in full measure the nothingness of all that I formerly reckoned blessings," said Meloveeden one day to me; "and thank Providence that he has rescued me from the snares of vice by means of misfortunes which I deserved for my giddiness, or, properly speaking, bad behaviour. Here am I, a solitary man on the face of the earth, without wife, without relations, without friends, without any thing to subsist upon; and, besides, I have no right to excite pity by my condition, and console myself by the remembrance of my innocence. Bitter fate! what might I now have been, if I had continued in the service, employed my talents for the public benefit, and endeavoured to gain the attention and respect of reputable people, true sons of their father-land? I sought in life nothing but pleasure and dissipation, never troubling myself about the future, and not caring about the present. What have I got by those foolish acquaintances, connections founded on profligacy! Emptiness of heart, and repentance of soul. I ruined my wife, whose only fault was thoughtlessness. I might

have made of her a good and happy companion, the ornament of her sex. My dear friend ! Let my example serve you for a lesson. In my youth I had no guide to be depended upon : this was the cause of all my misfortunes ! My lively imagination and hot temper, were allowed full reins. No one thought of giving me any rules for my guidance through the journey of life. In my youth I regarded as synonymous, morality and ennui. Vejeeghen, you are at present in exactly such a predicament as I was at your years. You have also been taught every thing except that which is indispensably necessary for you to know. Beware of people who seek your friendship merely for the sake of pursuing pleasure in company. Never obey first emotions, and consider the means well before you set about the attainment of your ends. You are a handsome lad ! Take care of the women. - - But you are yawning, Vejeeghen ! I see that moral philosophy will act upon you more by example than by precept." And in reality, not being accustomed to hear lectures on morality, I could hardly keep from sleeping on my saddle, when Meloveeden gave vent to his feelings from the bottom of his soul. " My dear friend," added he, " whether you will or not, I must be your guide in the world. If not my past morality, at least my past experience and present wish to reform, as well as my affection for you, give me a title to it." I gave him my hand, and he clasping it in his own, said : " For ever."

Within an hour's march of the first Russian forepost, we took leave of our Kirgheezyan escort. When

we saw the Russian sentinel, our hearts beat quicker, and we sent up our prayers in tears, with blessings on our dear country. One must be absent from it to feel the pleasure of returning to the land of his nativity. The first minute after crossing the frontiers is quite enchanting. The future presents itself in its most attractive form ; all its shadings disappear from the picture, and every man who speaks his mother-tongue is hailed as a friend, as a brother !

The commander of the forepost, a Cossack officer, received us very civilly, but at the sametime signified to us, that, as we had no passports, and were returning to Russia with things not yet used, he must present us in the first place to the local authorities, where we would receive tickets of residence ; in the second place to the custom-house, where our goods would be examined, the duty paid, and stamps affixed. Next day we set off thither, escorted by an orderly and six Cossacks.

On arriving at the district-town we waited upon the Sheriff. Michael Ivanoveetch Shtweekoff had been Major in an infantry regiment, had retired on account of his wounds, and accepted of the appointment of *Capitan Eespravnik* of his native place, at the request of the landholders. He was a man of about forty years of age, and had rather an air of moroseness and importance about him. It was also observable, that, from his habits of command and subordination, he expected submission from those whom he reckoned his inferiors. When we waited upon him, he hardly rose from his chair, and in return to our bows only nodded

his head. Then he took the paper from the orderly, and as soon as he read in it, that Meloveeden was a retired lieutenant, and I a minor of a noble family, he rose a second time, made a respectful bow, although very drily, and, as it is called, from on high; then he sat down, and pointing to a row of chairs beside the opposite wall, said with a drawling voice: "We beg you will please to be seated." In the meantime his clerk appeared, who, stretching himself like a fiddle-string, and with his arm bent like a tailor, waited the word of command. "Gentlemen," said Shtweekoff, "there have been cases of Russian vagrants, and even criminals concealing themselves in the Kirgheezyan *steppes*, returning from thence under other names, and even calling themselves people of rank. To put a stop to this mischief, the orders at present are, not to give passports to Russian travellers till we have proofs of their statements being correct. And so you must excuse me if I detain you in our town till answers come from Moscow, and the government-town, to my papers, which I shall send off by this post. I know that if I should wait till I received a decision from a court of law, before I gave you your passports, your hairs would grow grey with grief and old age; but I permit myself some liberties for the common good. I have written to the governor direct with my own hand, and to Moscow to a friend of mine. If I am convinced of the veracity of your statements, I will storm all forms. I now beg one of you will retire to the other room, till we take the other's verbal statement." An attendant conducted me into another room through the

passage, and from ennui I employed myself in examining the pictures which hung on the walls in wooden frames, stained with black oil paint. Above all, my attention was attracted to an inscription under a glass, written on parchment in letters, composed of human figures in various positions, heels uppermost, on their knees, crawling, &c. The inscription was to this effect: "Such is the world now-a-days!" Farther on hung some copperplates painted with the finger, and engraved with a nail; *the four seasons of the year; the four quarters of the globe; the adventures of Genevieve of Brabant;* and in the most honourable place, above a large elbow-chair, the portrait of Peter the Great. In a small cupboard with a glass door, there stood some dozens of books, amongst which I observed, *The Bible and New Testament; the Ball of Russian History, by Kheelkoff; Tatischeff's Russian History; the Law Memorandum Book; the Works of Lomonosoff; and the Address-calendar.* In a quarter of an hour I was called into the Eespravnik's sitting room, and had to give answers to the questions put. I merely mentioned that I had quitted my aunt in Moscow in company with Vorovaa-teen for Orenburg; that I was taken ill in that town, and on coming to my senses, found myself a prisoner among the Kirgheez, not knowing how. I did not wish to state my conjectures concerning Vorovaa-teen and Nojoff, and that Arsalan Sultan had saved me from the hands of monsters who wished to take away my life. That would have carried me too far, and might have involved me in a criminal suit. Meloveeden advised

me to keep silent about it, till we should make some further discoveries, or should meet with Voravaateen. When the examination was finished, the sheriff required me to give up into his custody all my money, and signified that he would seek out for us reasonable and comfortable lodgings, where they would give us credit. "Your money I shall return you," added he, "when-ever I get answers from Moscow and the Governor!" At these words Meloveeden could not contain his indignation, but exclaimed: "How do you dare to plunder us?" "To plunder," repeated the Eespravnik, growing red with chagrin. "Sir, I have taken a town by storm, I have ruled provinces, but never plundered. You may thank your stars that your situation and my office do not allow us to settle the affair in another way. I act according to law; do you understand me, *according to law!* you are passportless individuals. I do not know who you are, and my reason for not leaving money in your hands is, to prevent you from over-leaping all the precautions which I have taken on your account. If I left it with you, it would be all the same as if I left with Turkish prisoners the keys of my powder-magazine. Please to depart to your lodgings!" Recollecting Sava Saveetch, and thinking all Eespravniks were birds of a feather, I said to him: "I say Mr. Major, let us settle the business amicably; take for yourself a couple of hundred ducats, and let us off to day for Moscow without further trouble." The *Eespravnik's* face again glowed like a coal; he darted his large eyes in my face and held his peace. "If that is too little," added I, "take another hundred, and free

us from farther claims." At this the *Eesprarnik* heaved a groan, blustered forth two or three dozen abusive expressions, which, however, had no direct reference to any one, and which were repeated by us unconsciously in a sort of whisper, and exclaimed in a fury; "Young man! hold your tongue, or I shall not be able to contain myself! How do you dare to offer me money? You have certainly spent your youth among rogues or" ——— He could not finish his speech for passion. I answered coolly; "Excuse me, I have known sheriffs, judges, and even procureurs." "Devil take them and you," exclaimed the *Eesprarnik*; "deliver up your money, and be off with you." Here was no alternative, and I gave up my bagful of ducats. The *Eesprarnik* counted over the money in silence, gave me an acknowledgment that he had received it into his custody, and ordered an invalid to conduct us to our lodgings, saying that that attendant would remain with us for a guard of honour. When we got into the street, Meloveeden said, "What do you think now, brother; we have fallen out of the frying pan into the fire! This *Eesprarnik* has no more ceremony about him than the Kirgheezian troopers. We shall see our ducats as soon as we see our ears, I am afraid! Gold melts like butter when it passes through the hands of these law-mongers. What a cursed *Capitan Eesprarnik*?" "Do not get into a passion, my dear friend, and do not judge too hastily, replied I; "it is true that this *Capitan Eesprarnik* is as rough as a wild horse; but you perceived what a passion he got into when we suspected him of bribery."

“That is all a fetch,” returned Meloveeden; “it is long since I gave up trusting in the integrity of people in office, and I am ready to pledge you any thing that we shall never see more of our ducats. You will not knock money out of that fellow’s pocket with a cannon shot: why should he have been content with a part, when he had the whole in his power? You surely know the mathematical axiom that a part cannot be equal to the whole.” “But the receipt?” “What is that scrap of paper worth, when even a regular stamp in the hands of a lawyer turns into tinder as if it were on the coals. They will pluck you so, that you will be glad to leave them all your property in their hands for the sake of preserving your body and soul.” “We shall see!” “We shall see!”

There were two clean rooms hired for us in the house of a merchant who traded in wine, sugar, tea, and groceries. We found waiting us the gentlemen of the custom-house, who were circumambulating our bales of goods as a fox does a hen-house; but our old soldier, like a real mastiff, was guarding our property, seated on a bale, and squinting about on every side. We had hardly entered the room, when the custom-house officers came up to us, one of them with leaden stamps, a hammer, and strings, another with writing paper, and a third with a large book under his arm. “Excuse us, gentlemen, for disturbing you,” said one of them, with a gentleman-like air; “But we shall soon finish the business,” returned the second. “And we shall arrange it as is most agreeable to yourselves, relying upon your word,” added the third. “Our duty

is encumbered with many unpleasantnesses," said the first; "but between men of honour and breeding, there are ways and means to soften and shorten the tedious and disagreeable part of the business; particularly in the present case, we must be indulgent; you are not merchants, and do not know that you must give a declaration, make out a list of the merchandize, put down the value, and write and subscribe a great variety of different papers!" "I will take all that upon myself," said the second, rolling up the paper and making a respectful bow. "Then the stamping and valuation," added the first: "That is my affair," said the third, "making a bow. And, lastly, the payment of the duties. I shall take upon myself," said the first, raising his voice and looking knowingly at the two others.—"Gentlemen," said I, "follow the proper course. We understand nothing of this business, but seeing your civility, hope that you will not injure us." "Injure you! God forbid!" exclaimed all the three together; "Allow us now to proceed with the business," said the first, "and I beg you to be present, seeing that we have no underhand work, and do not wish to raise suspicions on honourable people."

We went all together into the court-yard where the bales were lying; some of their attendants fell to work to unpack them, and I, not knowing what was in them, was very glad when I saw a whole heap of silk-stuffs, Bukharian shawls, and a bale of Cashmere shawls of excellent quality. I observed that the colour went into the cheeks of the custom-house officers at the sight of these goods. The first of them took me and Meloveeden

by the arm, led us aside and said, "The duties on these goods will be very high, almost the half of the whole value. But we shall arrange all that so that the wolf may be filled and the sheep remain entire. However, to fix the value, allow us to take home with us some odd pieces of all these goods; for if we value them in the presence of others, you understand, we cannot do any thing for your advantage." I looked at Meloveeden—he smiled and shrugged his shoulders. "Do what you please, only have done with it as soon as possible," said I. The officer made a respectful bow, and turning to the bales, whispered a few words to his companions, and began to lay some of the goods to one side. In the meantime, the other wrote, and the third affixed the stamps: the affair went on flamingly. At last the light began to leave us, and the gentlemen of the custom-house went away, leaving their own sentinels beside the goods. When it was completely dark, a carter came in at the back-gate, put into his cart the goods that had been laid aside, and went away with them for valuation. Next day by dawn, one of the officers made his appearance with a multitude of papers to which I had to affix my name. At last he presented the valuation of the goods and the account of the duties which I had to pay. I wrote a note to the *Eespravnik* begging him to satisfy the custom-house; which he immediately did, locked up all the goods in a warehouse and put his seal to it, saying, "Your goods are subject to the same lot as your ducats. You will have a right to dispose of them as soon as I receive an answer."

When all these operations were performed, our landlord, a respectable old man with a white beard, came into our room and intimated to us, that if we wanted anything we should apply to him. I begged him to go to the gentlemen of the custom-house, and request them to deliver us back the goods which they had taken home to value. ‘What falls among dung, you will never find again!’* added the old man smiling. “Notwithstanding all that, they charged you double the regular duty. These gentlemen forgot neither themselves nor the exchequer.” “That may be called the knowledge how to unite the useful with the agreeable!” said Meloveeden. I would have got into a passion and lodged a complaint against them, but the merchant quieted me and restrained me from any such attempts, by representing that it would be all to no purpose, as I had signed the quittances. “We must submit patiently to circumstances which we cannot avoid, worthy sirs!” said the merchant. “For instance, if the doors of the house are low, all that would enter, must stoop to avoid knocking their heads. If one spar on a bridge is higher than the rest, every carriage must be jolted on crossing it. Exactly so in some affairs of common life, there are continual abuses which arise from the facility of committing them: neither time, nor laws, nor force, can altogether eradicate them. Even in the days of the apostles, the occupation of revenue-officers was notorious for procuring them riches with the imprecations of the multitude.—

* A Russian proverb.

Up to this time the collectors of taxes in all countries of the world maintain the splendour of their ancient name, and like worthy descendants, do not fall behind the fame of their predecessors. You have to day, gentlemen, had experience of that truth yourselves ; while I experience it my whole life. Besides, gentlemen, you should not judge of the whole by a part. Every thing has its right side and its wrong, and among the revenue officers of the present day, you will find people who are worthy of every respect. But unfortunately such is the way of the world, that wherever there are most opportunities to transgress, there will be most transgression. A blacksmith cannot easily avoid burning his fingers, nor a fisher avoid wetting himself. You understand me, gentlemen !”

Our first exertions were directed to dress ourselves in the European fashion ; for we had no other apparel but the Kirgheezian. Having money, I wished to get a suit of fashionable clothes. Till the landlord procured cloth for us, we spent some days within doors, looking out from the windows at the passers by. The house was in a square where there was also a German tavern. This was the place of resort for the magistrates and gentry who were in town upon business or idleness. We wished to find out the fashions, but we could make neither head nor tail of them : in a *district town*, ‘every man to his mind,’ in the full sense of that proverb. Young people wore immense whiskers and mustachios bedizened with tobacco-smoke and Spanish brown. The bristly head was covered with a *chapeau de voyage*, or foraging-cap. The *vengerka*,

that is to say surtout, adorned with strings in the hus-sar fashion, or Cossacktchekmen, long velveteen or nankeen trowsers, and a black stock, composed the dress of the *district*-dandy. Coats were reserved for important occasions, balls, marriages, and formal dinner-parties. Every country gentleman was in the habit of providing himself with a suit of clothes in the capital, when he happened to be there upon any business, such as borrowing money from the *Opekoonsky Soryet*,* or of ordering clothes through his friends in the government-town. Owing to this there was no prevailing fashion in this *district*-town, and it was impossible to learn which of the old fashions was the latest. Besides this, fashionable coats and waistcoats were very frequently transferred from hand to hand by way of barter, by the help of fifty-two painted pieces of pasteboard, and owing to that a man's clothes did not always fit him. In a word, we were so unfortunate as not to be able in the course of six days to see one man dressed according to fashion; while the three chief tailors of the place, whom we invited to take a part in our consultations, differed essentially in their opinions. At last the bailiff of a grandee, just arrived from Moscow, relieved us from our perplexity. We, taking him for a model, got our clothes made, equipped ourselves as it might happen, and began to sally forth out of the house.

The principal personages in the town were the

* The bank connected with the Foundling Hospital, which lends money upon pledge of serfs and immoveable property.

Mayor, (Gorodneetchy) the lawyer of the district, and the treasurer and members of the district-court : the last mentioned persons, however, had no strong ties on the community, as they lived on their estates, and came to town only during the terms of the court's sitting. Their representative was the secretary, who, in his own person, united all the importance of a court of law in its juridical and political capacity. The *Capitan Eespravnik*, although he enjoyed great consideration through the district, had not so much power in the city as the mayor, and was therefore neither the first nor the second person there, but equal with the *Gorodneetchy*—consequently his actual rival. In this small circle, the great world, (with all its intrigues, caprices, and singularities,) was reflected, “ *like the sun in a little drop of water !*”

At the end of a fortnight, the *Capitan Eespravnik* being satisfied with our modest demeanour, quenched his wrath, and moved his sister, the lawyer's wife, to invite us to her name's-day feast. We went to dinner, and found already assembled a numerous society. The married ladies arrayed in blond caps, rich dresses, cashmere shawls, adorned with pearls and brilliants, sat by themselves, talking loudly all the time. The young ladies formed a separate knot, and whispered to each other, with downcast eyes. The lady of the house did not remain among her guests, but ran about the rooms sweating and bustling. Her blond cap was blackened a little with the kitchen smoke, and her curls were loosened by the heat. As soon as any fresh guest came into the room, the landlady's little daughter immediately ran

to tell her, and she flew into the room in a flurry, with her face as red as a coal; then, after paying her compliments to her guest and shewing him a seat, she again hastened to the cares of her household. The other guests examined with an eager gaze every new-comer from top to toe, and appeared to dissect the stranger's dress with their eyes. The gentlemen, who were mostly people in official situations, were all in uniform : they strutted up and down the rooms, and stopped frequently at a little table, on which stood spirits and whets. All knew our adventures, and as I had money and merchandize, they all behaved civilly to us, only with a patronising air ; for they did not know yet whether I might not be in court as a petitioner, or whether I was free from any legal proceedings.

I wished to hear something of the conversation which passed among the ladies of these provincial potentates, and standing at the door of a small drawing-room, overheard what follows :—" Ah, mother, * what a superb cap you have got ! Have you really brought it from the fair ?" " No, mother ; direct from Moscow from the *Kooznetzky most*, † from a French *madame*." " But your dress, ma'am, is it sewed here ?" " Lord have mercy upon us ! I have already got those home-bred sempstresses of the lady of the *Dvorensky Predvodeét!* ‡ They can shape and sew ; but, mother,

* Mother is used among acquaintances and among the lower orders in place of ' madam,' in conversation.

† Literally ' the blacksmith's bridge,' a fashionable street ; in a word, the Bond Street of Moscow.

‡ Marshal of the noblesse, the same office as that of con-
vener of the county in Scotland.

they cannot take the fashion from the fashionable engravings." " You really have the Journals written in French !" " Where is the harm ; there is Matrena Ivanovna does nothing but sits reading French books from morning to night. If she had but the rumgumption to give directions to her sempstresses." - - - " You are right ; there are tailors who write for the use of sempstresses, but every one cannot understand what an artizan writes in his own language." " That is true ; there is Andrew Koosmeetch's son read me not long ago a description of a fashionable dress, but the deuce take it if I could understand a word of it." " It is no wonder ; they are a cunning people those French, who have words for expressing every stitch, every hook and every hem !" " But you, my dear, you have not yet shown off your new shawl ; magnificent !" " And where did you buy it ?" " My Seedor Yermolayeveetch brought it with him from his out-post." " God save him !" " But your *fermoir*, where was it bought, my dear gossip ?" " In Petersburg."—" Yes, I saw it on the contractor's wife." " My Karp Karpeetch got it from him in payment of a debt, and at a dear price, mother." " How can a contractor be in debt ?" " You would not have an advocate to be indebted to a contractor." " That is true, mother." " By the bye, has Aquilina Semenovna Padtchereetzen been with you ? From her husband's affairs there hangs a tale." " She has been." " And she was with me." " And with me." " Ah, mother, what a woman ! She seems to be born for the law ; for she scatters Ukazes about at no allowance ! always sigh-

ing and complaining of poverty and straitened circumstances; but what shawls, what pearls!" "It is said that she did not forget herself when her husband was in place." "Why should she, she was surely no fool!" "Both heart and head were engaged in the cause?" "Did you hear the anecdote of the big pearls which hang on her neck like a pad; God forgive me!" "No!" "Ah, tell us, tell us!" "When her husband was in power, the secretary durst not engross a decision without asking Aquilina Semenovna, and the petitioners were obliged to address themselves to her before they appeared in court with their petitions. One day there came to her an old woman with a handkerchief about her head and a strange looking *shoob*,* to petition in favour of her grandson whom the community had marked out for a recruit. After falling down at her feet, the old woman gave Aquilina Semenovna a little box, adding, "Take this, ma'am; if it does not suit you, it will do for your daughter." Aquilina Semenovna thinking that the old woman was giving her a snuff-box, fell into a passion, screamed out with all her might in order that the country gentlemen who were in the adjoining room might hear of her disinterestedness, and gave the old woman a box of another sort in return. The box fell on the ground, and the pearls were scattered on the floor. What a pucker she was in! There was Aquilina Semenovna sprawling on the floor, gathering up the pearls, and bawling out to her daughter Ashenka to come to her assistance. Ashenka flew to her from the other room,

* Fur coat.

but forgot to shut the door, so that the gentlemen saw the whole farce. One of them questioned the old woman on the street, and spread the news through all the government." "Ha, ha, ha!" "That was a lesson not to despise trifles. It is not for nought that Seedor Karpeetch always repeats :—'What is good to give is good to keep, and every gift is complete.'"

At this moment, we were called to dinner. The ladies were seated on one side at the upper end of the table and the gentlemen apart. I occupied a seat beside the sheriff. The dinner began with an immense fish-pye, which would have been large enough to hold our worthy hostess herself at full length. Cordials of all colours and denominations were summoned to assist the digestion of the pye, and were gulped down the throats of the guests in large draughts, to prevent any prejudicial effects from the unbaked crust and half-raw fish. A cold course followed the pye, consisting of pig with horse radish, calf's-foot jelly, ham, &c. The cold portion behoved to be warmed, and the cordials were again called in, along with Madeira, which sparkled beautifully in beer-glasses. Highly seasoned Russian *shtchee* * had also to be dissolved in the stomach with Madeira; and thus by the time that we arrived at the first dish after the *shtchee*, there was already a fine colour on the foreheads of our worthy company, and their noses blushed like cran-berries. It was here that I first understood the real meaning of the Russian proverb :—'The first glass like a stick, the second like a

* Cabbage soup, usually seasoned with sour cream.

hawk.' The only difference with us consisted in their swallowing like hawks not glassfuls but tumblerfuls and bottlefuls. By the time that some dishes with sauces went round, before the appearance of the roast, all the guests, (except the *Capitan Eespravnik*, myself, and Meloveeden), were in a disposition of mind fit for climbing a battery. Wine soaked the hard hearts of law, and openness arose with its fumes and settled upon their tongues. "Marteeneetch," bawled the secretary of the Zemsky Dood,* so loudly that the windows shook; "Marteeneetch! - - - you deceived me, you wretch, and let the bear out of my toils. I would not forgive you for an age, if your wife were not my gossip." "Don't get into a passion; you have given us quite enough of that; if you had had the skinning of the bear, you would not have left us a lock of the fleece. You cannot deny that you are a first-rate hand at gutting petitioners, Karp Karpeetch; at the same time you must not forget that I have also a wife and children to provide for." All the company laughed; "Nobody can deny Karp Karpeetch's skill in gutting," was echoed from all corners. The Secretary proudly turned about in his chair, stroked his head and paunch, and said, with an air of importance, "Why should an experienced tradesman flinch from his business."—"Respectable gentlemen!" cried out from the end of the table a thin bald-headed sallow-complexioned lawyer with a weak shrill voice, "The sum total of human wisdom is inscribed on a Dutch

* The district-court.

ducat. All the Latin which I learned at school is not worth that single inscription : ‘*Concordiâ res parvæ crescunt,*’ that is to say, ‘Property is kept together by good agreement.’ It follows from that, that if the gentlemen of the bench wish to have ducats, they must live in peace and concord, be of one mind in their decisions, and listen to their secretary. It may also be affirmed, that the knight whose figure is upon the ducat, is no other than a Secretary, and the bundle of arrows in his hand, denotes that he ought to hold all the business of all the judges in his hands !” “Bravo, Cleemeetch, bravo !” exclaimed the lawyers in extacy. “Hold in his hands” added the Secretary ; “yes, if he has iron gloves !”

In the meantime, a hamper of Champagne was brought into the room, and toasts were circulated. After drinking the health of the lady of the house, her husband, and at last of every guest and his wife separately, his children, his man-servants and maid-servants, they fell a drinking in good earnest, for the purpose of discussing the contents of the bottles. When they had finished the hamper, they then rose from the table, and made a shift to get into the drawing-room.

I have made no mention hitherto of my neighbour the *Capitan Eesprarnik*. He took no part either in the drinking or the conversation of the honourable company, and kept silence till dinner was over. The guests also did not address themselves to him ; for, knowing his ways, they were afraid lest he should tell them to their face any blunt truth usually styled rude-

ness. After dinner the *Capitan Eesprarnik* invited me and Meloveeden into the garden which lay opposite the dining-room, where, among fruit-trees planted without any regularity, there were growing, sun-flowers, poppies, and pæonias. We sat down on a turf-seat, and the *Capitan Eesprarnik* said :—" It is with pleasure I observe, that you have no propensity to empty glasses after the example of my worthy colleagues. You may easily judge of my melancholy condition," added he, turning to Meloveeden, " on seeing with what people an old officer has to spend his life. But necessity wears a stone. These leeches of law would have long since stopped my breath, if I had not fortunately or unfortunately been connected by my sister's marriage with one of their chosen vessels, and had not been in favour with the Governor, my former General. It is difficult to swim against the current ; and it is the utmost that I can do to fence off my part of the government from their inroads. The noblesse elected me, and allowed me as a maintenance hardly a sufficiency to live upon. If you remain longer here, you will hear more of Shtweekoff, and I beg you will not form an opinion of the whole district from what you have hitherto seen and heard. There are here honourable and noble people among the landholders and officers chosen by them ; but as our gentry unfortunately do not study the practice of Russian law, and few of them are accustomed to put their thoughts on paper, those who have been brought up in the civil service decline being elected, as they prefer to live at ease on their estates : hence it follows as a matter

of course, that the lawyers have the ball at their foot. This is a particular breed in old Russia, which lives, like the moth, on the dust of Ukazes. I advise you to go home, if you do not wish to have your feelings still more shocked. Perhaps it may come to pass that the guardians of justice will pull one another by the hair when they bring matters to a further explanation." The *Eespravnik* rose, and we followed his advice. In the meantime several of the guests entered the garden, arm-in-arm, and singing songs. On returning to the house in order to find our caps, we observed that several of them were seated at a card-table, playing at faro, and at another table, at *gor'ka*, and pocketfuls of bank-notes began to pass from hand to hand.

On arriving at home, we called for the landlord that he might explain to us some things which were to us incomprehensible. "Explain to us, we beseech you," said I, "what sort of a *lusus naturæ* that *Eespravnik* of yours is?"

"He goes under the name of Tchudak* among us," replied the landlord. "In reality, Michael Ivanoveetch Shtweekoff is not in the least like his comrades, and, owing to that, appears singular to all. He springs from the small gentry of this district. He entered the military service when he was quite young, and at his parents' death, gave his share of the inheritance to the orphan daughters of his deceased sister who had married an honest but poor civilian. His other sister you know. On his obtaining a majority and retiring

* A prodigy.

from the service on account of his wounds, he lived here in my house upon his small pension, till the freeholders offered him the situation of Sheriff. Michael Ivanoveetch declared resolutely that he could not take a bribe, and would not learn to do so, and therefore did not wish to accept a situation which was attended with additional expenses. The freeholders at last prevailed on him to accept of it, and assigned him a certain sum of money for his chancery and travelling expences, with the knowledge of government. He has been already ten years *Eespravnik*, and all the honest people bless him. All the assessments, the repairs of roads, carriage of stores and billets, are levied among us with the greatest exactness, by rotation, and according to the number of souls.

“ The collection of taxes and arrears is managed without any remission, but with the greatest condescension to the poor. Deserters and vagabonds dare not shew their faces in our district: the country people, knowing that their apprehension is agreeable to the wishes of their worthy *Eespravnik*, whom they call their father, have entirely given up harbouring them, and immediately bring them to justice. Judicial investigations are carried on without threatening or flogging, but with rigid justice. At the fairs, Michael Ivanoveetch does not take money from the merchants for permission to sell smuggled goods, or to deceive the unwary by bad articles, but looks after order, and the weights, measures, and qualities of the merchandize. At the levies of recruits, the starosts and delegates of the crown-villages do not dare to go out of

the regular order, and deprive of their last support unprotected parents. The bailiffs of private estates, the proprietors of which live in the capitals, cannot oppress the peasants and deceive their masters. Even the vicious and wicked masters, who, thank God, are very rare, cannot use their own serfs in an illegal manner. In a word, Michael Ivanoveetch, day and night, labours to eradicate mischief, to increase truth, and fulfil the laws. It is true that he is rough in his demeanour, does not like to waste words to no purpose, does not know how to soften down a bitter truth with fine speeches, and fulfil his duty with compliments. He is strict with culprits, implacable towards the wicked, and condescending merely to weakness, in deed, though not in words. He would have long since fallen a prey to the artifices of the lawyers and the devices of the abusers of power, if he had not been supported by our Governor, who is an honest, well-meaning man, likewise a soldier,* with whom he had been acquainted in the army.

“ All honest men love and respect Michael Ivanoveetch : wicked men hate him, and fear him like the pestilence. In other respects, he does not meddle with what does not belong to him, and only requires that other people should not interfere with his business. Such a man is our Tchudak ! He has treated you rather strictly, but it is according to law, and although he behaved rudely, however he did not insult you, or help himself to any of your property, like the

* General Von Essen.

custom-house gentry." "I am quite of a mind," added Meloveeden, "that sour medicine is better than sweet poison."

CHAPTER XIX.

Conversation upon business with a Russian Merchant.—A turbulent man.—End of a Malefactor.

OUR landlord invited us to drink tea with him. We found with him the parish clergyman, and a decently dressed man of the middle age, whose behaviour and address shewed that he had been accustomed to live in good society. Our landlord introduced his guest to us, calling him Peter Petróveetch Veertooteen. We seated ourselves around an oaken table, drank tea, and entered into a discussion concerning subjects which appeared to me extremely important, as this was the first time that I ever heard any conversation upon public affairs.

“ Would not you think it strange, even incomprehensible, gentlemen !” said the merchant, “ if in all the ports of France there were none but Dutch and Germans, or in the ports of England none but Spaniards, and Italians, who carried on the foreign trade, and if the French and English were merely occupied like camels in carrying merchandise from the interior to the sea-shore, for the sole purpose that foreigners might reap incredible profits, without labour, without trouble, without responsibility, with nothing to begin with, but the brass-plate engraved, ‘ *Kontóra,*’

(counting-house) on their doors?" "I would say decidedly," replied Peter Petróveetch, that if the natives of the country work like oxen, allowing foreigners to cut beef-steaks out of their carcasses, that is to say, if the natives work for the enrichment of *parvenus*, who trade upon their labour, these *indigenes* must certainly have either an insufficiency of mother-wit, or money, or honesty, to be themselves merchants."

"That is too harsh a judgment," replied the priest: "I would say that probably some other ruling passion withdraws the natives from foreign trade, and puts all its advantages into the hands of interlopers."

"You would both have grounds for these opinions," said the merchant; "but fortunately you are in the right, father. I shall endeavour to explain the matter. I speak of our dear country. Is it not strange, is it not humiliating to national pride, that in Russia almost all the foreign trade is carried on by aliens, in their counting-houses and factories, which are established in the ports, and even in the capitals, as if Russia were another China or Japan? Foreign merchants and manufacturers carry on their business entirely with these counting-houses; and we Russians must lift up our eyes to these counting-house gentlemen, to be allowed to furnish them with what they want for exportation, or to buy from them foreign produce at whatever prices they please to fix in their common council. These foreign counting-house gentry, to whom we give the title of *negociants*, pay no more regard to the Russian merchants than they do to their own warehouse-

porters, as if it were a charity to give us the hundredth part of their profits. Tell me, gentlemen, do you think this course of events will continue for ever, and that we shall always remain in the same backward state, as we were when Richard Chancellor discovered Archangel in the reign of the Tzar Ivan Vasilyeveetch? It appears to me, that we have all the means to constitute a respectable commercial class. The capacity, penetration, and prudence of our people gets its due from foreigners themselves. Our honesty in trade is really not less than that of our benefactors the foreign counting-house gentlemen; and as to capital, we will always have the superiority, as we hold in our hands the raw produce of our soil and native manufactures. On the contrary, the counting-house men have often nothing to begin with, as I said before, but the brass-plate with the inscription, ‘*Kontóra*’ upon their door, and some bankers’ letters of recommendation.”

“Some bankers’ letters of recommendation! There you have it,” exclaimed Peter Petróveetch. “Tell me, my dear Seedor Yermoláyeveetch, whom would you trust most; an old townsman whose good character you have long known, or a strange merchant of whom you know nothing?” “Of course I would sooner trust my townsman,” replied the merchant. “But with your leave, Peter Petróveetch, if this comparison is applicable to our discussion, I think that the Russian merchants should with more reason be compared to the old townsman.”

“To appearance but not in reality,” returned Peter Petróveetch. “You, Seedor Yermoláyeveetch, have

traded for fifty years, and know all the principal merchants in Moscow and Petersburg. Count over to me, if you please, half a dozen Russian families which have been known in trade since the days of their great grandfathers?"

"I confess I do not know one," replied Seedor Yermoláyeveetch. "Among us, as soon as a merchant grows rich, he either becomes bankrupt from ceasing to live like his brethren, throwing up his business, assuming the style of a nobleman, and marrying his daughters to beggarly Princes and Counts, or gets drunk with ostentation and joy, and leaves his property to be plundered by rogues of clerks, and spendthrifts of children, who are ashamed of following their father's profession, and hunt after ranks; or lastly, he may himself attain personal nobility by different by-ways, under the mask of his zeal and services to the state. It is true we have no old commercial houses, and there is hardly one distinguished Russian firm in the empire, which can go farther back than the reign of the Empress Catherine the Second."

"Trade is supported by credit, and credit by the renown and antiquity of a family," said Peter Petróveetch. "In England, in France, in the German Hanseatic towns, in Holland, in Sweden, and in Denmark, you will find mercantile houses whose firm has been known for the course of centuries, and is more to be depended upon than the escutcheons of Princes. But amongst us, merchants are mere birds of passage in trade! One of our merchants appears on the stage, grows fat, climbs the hill, and then either

descends or takes his pleasure, powdering himself with the dust of heraldry."

"It is true, really true!" added the merchant, stroking his beard. "I shall mention another circumstance," said Peter Petróveetch. "Among us, there are few merchants who make fortunes in the way of ordinary trade; but it is mostly in government contracts that they make their money. The contractors and farmers of the revenue cannot, in my opinion, be called either merchants or negociants. For he only confers a real benefit on the trade of his native country, who extends it beyond its frontiers, and favours the consumption of our produce abroad.* It is thus that the wealthy foreign houses and manufacturers are obliged involuntarily to carry on their business in Russia by means of counting-houses, the occupiers of which are recommended to them by old established mercantile families of respectability with whom the persons recommended have been formerly clerks. How is it possible to have extensive transactions with people who come, God knows from whence, and disappear, God knows how and whither, from the scene of action."

"That is true," said the clergyman. "But do not attach too much blame to the merchants. There are very many circumstances which oblige them to leave their profession at the first favourable opportunity. In the first place."— — — On a sudden there was a noise raised in the passage. The landlord was on

* 'A little knowledge is a dangerous thing.'

his way thither; but he had scarcely risen from his chair, when the door opened with a bounce, and into the room with a howl ran a huge mastiff-dog. Then appeared a gentleman in a travelling dress, with a pipe between his teeth, and behind him a footman and an understrapper of the Police. In the meantime, as the dog was smelling about all the corners of the room, and his master was undressing himself without more ado, the policeman said: "Here is a lodger for you, Seedor Yermoláyeveetch:—his *High-well-born-ship** is come from Petersburg on government business, and you are so fortunate, that your house has taken his fancy." "Have mercy upon us; there are already six men in the government-service quartered upon me," replied the landlord: "besides that, the *Capitan Eespravnik* ordered me to take in these two gentlemen." "Hold your tongue, long beard!" said the man of office, casting a grim look at the respectable old man. "I wish to have no further acquaintance either with thee or thy *Capitan Eespravnik*, and will remain here because it pleases myself." The landlord turned to the policeman, and said: "But the neighbouring houses are quite unoccupied." "How can you compare your house with your neighbour's houses?" replied the policeman. "They are gentlemen in office, people of rank; you know that with them lodges the Governor, the Procureur.— — — Enough, enough, Seedor Yermoláyeveetch, if we have not

* As this compound forms one word in Russian, it is here translated literally, in order to give the reader an idea of Russian titles of honour.

merchants to answer all purposes, what order would there be ? It is strong men who should carry burdens, and you are the richest of them all." The policeman went out, and the man of office said ; " Move about now, old one ; your brotherhood here seem to have a fine time of it, when you dare to be so contumacious !" " I make no objections," replied the merchant ; " but I and my family have only three small rooms remaining, and I do not know where to lodge you." " I shall take two, and you can occupy the third," said the man of office : " and if you are too crowded, you can betake yourself to the pantry. Observe what airs this boor gives himself !" " I am no boor, Sir, but a merchant." " But do you think that is not all the same ?" replied the man of office, with a laugh. " He who is not a nobleman, what can he be but a boor ?" We left the room, and the landlord followed us. " Gentlemen !" said he, " we have found out the reasons why merchants do not like to remain in their profession. This is a small sample of the respect which the other classes pay us. But you have not yet seen the thousandth part of our vexations, and when you see them, recollect the good features in our character, and do not lay the blame where it is not due !" The clergyman shrugged up his shoulders, and without saying one word, went home. The landlord had to remain to make room for his new lodger, while we with Peter Petróveetch went to take a walk in the outskirts of the town.

" It is amongst us here as it is every where ; every thing will go its own course," said Peter Petró-

veetch, "till civilization circulates through all classes of the community. It is only the man of education and refinement who can in full measure be sensible of his duties to others, and can respect all his fellow-creatures. The well educated man knows that in a properly regulated empire, every profession is respectable, and as necessary as all the strings of an instrument to produce harmony. Ignorance erects a barrier between them, and it is from exactly the same motives as a Turk when he regards a Christian subject of the Porte as no man, that our haughty ignoramuses despise all who are not related to them, and who cannot give them ranks and orders. For example, is not your landlord a respectable man in every point of view? Whence is that? Because he is sensible and well informed: it is a pity that he did not receive a systematic education in his youth; in that case he would have been a hundred times more useful to his country. Seedor Yermoláyeveetch draws his origin from the sooty crown-serfs. He was left an orphan by the death of his parents, engaged as a shopman with a merchant who was a distant relation of his own; and by his industry, attention, and good behaviour, has scraped together a little property, improved himself by reading, intercourse with well-informed people, reflection and experience. He is educating his sons at the university, putting himself to straits in order that they may enjoy the first of earthly benefits—the first requisite of an immortal soul. You have seen that worthy clergyman, father Eugenius.—He may also serve as an example that education does

not interfere with the performance of the clerical duties of his profession. On the contrary, by raising his spiritual character in the eyes of the people, he confirms them more in faith and morality, eloquently illustrated by the pastors of our church, and strengthened by the example of their blameless lives." In the course of our conversation upon various subjects, we could not avoid touching upon the circumstances of Peter Petróveetch Veertooteen's own life. We were quite astonished when he told us that he was not a native of the place, but lived there a prisoner at large.—We begged him to explain to us the cause of this singular occurrence, and Peter Petróveetch related to us as follows :—" My father was a poor nobleman, and had no means for his subsistence, but his small salary. He married the daughter of a merchant well in the world, and received a dowry of about fifty thousand roubles.* My mother died in bringing me into the world. My father then quitted the service and employed himself in my education. I had masters to instruct me in the sciences, but my father was himself my superintendent in the moral department. He imbued my mind with an unlimited devotion to the throne, under the persuasion that such an extensive empire as ours, composed of so many various tribes, can neither be happy nor powerful except under the rule of an absolute monarch. From my tender years my father inoculated my mind with the wholesome truth that there is no more elevated morality than what is contained in the

£2000 sterling.

precepts of the gospel. He allowed me to read all sorts of philosophical compositions, but would frequently repeat :—" My son, the apostle Paul says in his Epistle to the Thessalonians, " Prove all things ; hold fast that which is good." In the works of philosophers you will find much sense and still more sagacity, but nowhere will you find such rules for life as in the Gospel. In the works of philosophers you will also find many virtuous lessons, but nowhere will you find such elevated morality, such consolatory truths as in the Apostolic precepts. All the morality which is diffused through a thousand books of philosophy is included in the few words addressed to the Apostles ; " And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise." (Luke chap. vi.) And again, " But I say unto you which hear, love your enemies, do good to them which hate you," (ibidem.) My dear son, fulfil these two rules, and you will fulfil all your duty." My father was neither a bigot nor a hypocrite, but a real Christian, and by his living example confirmed me in the rules which he prescribed for me. After finishing my education, I entered the military service, On setting out for my regiment, my father blessed me after the manner of our Saviour, in the words of the Apostle : " Wherefore, putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour." (Paul's Epistle to Ephesians, chap. iv.)

" As I grew up in years I grew more confirmed in the rules which had been sown in my heart by my worthy parent, and became the more persuaded of the truth

that every man should assist his neighbour by all the means in his power. Every act of injustice done to any one by any one, made a strong impression upon me ; unfortunately I could not restrain my tongue, but exclaimed loudly against all abuses. We were quartered in the exuberant Ukraine, and the rich farmers shared their food with our gallant soldiers, who, during their vacant hours, assisted them in field-work.—The farmers did not wish to receive the government allowance, and I was the means of its being regularly sold for the benefit of the soldiers. At the settling of the ammunition and company-money, and on the pay-days, I always took the soldier's part. It is difficult always to squeeze the truth into delicate, soft forms, and I found myself frequently obliged to speak bitter truths, to quarrel and complain when they did not attend to me. I consequently got the name of a *turbulent man*, and was obliged to leave the regiment.

“ My father, who was now old and weakly, wished me to remain at home with him. I entered the civil service in the capital, in the judicatory department, to lose no opportunity of doing good to my country.—Here was an extensive field for my activity. My father was not a little vexed that I had been obliged to leave the military service against my inclination.—“ You fulfilled your duty ; this is your reward and consolation,” said he embracing me. When in due course I had to enter upon my new occupation, he called me into his closet, and pointing to the New Testament, which was lying open before him, requested me to read in the Epistle of Paul to Timothy,

chapter v. verse 20, ‘ Them that sin, rebuke before all, that others also may fear !’ He then pressed me to his heart, blessed me and said, “ Go, in God’s name, and fight for truth !”

“ I was like a watch-dog in the Temple of Justice, barked on the unconscientious abusers of the laws, did not allow the strong hand of villainy to profane the interior of the sanctuary, and shielded the unfortunate widow and orphan from their oppressors. Chicanery and usury directed all their forces against me. Men of business, who are indispensable to their superiors, as they do not know business themselves, declared that they could not live with such a *turbulent man* as I was, so I was ordered to retire.

“ In the meantime my father died, and I was left in the world a solitary individual, with a moderate property. My father made no attempts to increase his capital, supposing that my mother’s dowry would be enough for me, and employed his overplus revenue in assisting the poor. I followed his example, and, sharing it in a brotherly manner with the poor and needy, I protected them at the same time from the oppression of the powerful. I could not refuse my advice to the unfortunate, and even assisted to write petitions for those who had no protector, and who did not know how to repel chicanery and persecution by the power of eloquence and juridical skill. I interfered personally in behalf of the poor, and sometimes frightened the most inveterate usurers by my presence. I had to bear daily with a thousand disgusts ; but I spent my time laboriously. I consoled myself with the thought that

I obeyed the wishes of my father, and that the bitterness of disgust was more than counterbalanced by the sweet consolation which I procured for the suffering. I was happy ! A few good friends, with the pleasures arising from the sciences and literature, kept up my spirits, which malicious people wished to poison by their slander.

“ Clouds are formed from vapours ; rain is composed of drops ; calamity arises from slander, allegations, and instigations ; and malicious expressions, taken in connection, form the thunder storm in the moral world, which darts its bolts on the innocent. I gave no dinners, supposing that it was better to feed the poor with my superfluities than to saturate *gourmands* ; lent no money to spendthrifts, and was called a niggard. I went to the ordinary places of worship along with the people, and did not appear in uniform in the domestic chapels of grandees, and was called a godless man. Knowing that a monarchical government can have no other end consistent with its interests but the welfare of the governed, I never murmured against government, but exclaimed loudly against the abusers of power, who, regarding their places as farms on lease, thinking on nothing but their own enrichment, and the placing of their relations, raised a hue and cry against me as a *seditionous man*. I praised with a sincere heart such of the grandees as deserved it, and such of the people in public situations as were honest, and set them up for an example in contrast to the wicked and selfish ; therefore, I was called an intriguer and a partizan. Frequently from inability to keep my indigna-

tion within bounds, I set forth the truth in strong terms, in petitions written by me for others, and called things by their real names ; therefore, I was called *a wrangler*. From all the qualities ascribed to me, they formed one aggregate term—a *turbulent man*, and banished me to this town under the surveillance of the police. I confess, I was at first melancholy ; but the worthy clergyman Eugenius consoled me and comforted me. “ You have laboured not for the world, but for your immortal soul,” said father Eugenius ; “ consequently your reward will be spiritual. Recollect what the Apostle Luke says : ‘ *But love your enemies and do good and lend, hoping for nothing again ; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest ; for He is kind to the unthankful and to the evil !* ’ Be not disquieted under your misfortune, and do not slacken in the path to bliss, recollecting the words of the Apostle Paul, ‘ It is true that no chastening for the present seemeth joyous but grievous ; nevertheless it afterwards yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.’ I am now quieted and happy, for happiness is in the power of every one, and there is no place on the face of the earth without worthy people. I find pleasure in the friendship of the honest *Eespravnik*, the reverend clergyman Eugenius, and the merchant your landlord ; I spend my time in reading and walking, and do as much good as my means permit. Do not take this narrative of mine for self-commendation. No ! I am free from that vice, and have declared to you the truth, for your instruction, in order

that you may profit by it. There will come a time when the truth shall prevail, and sooner or later, but with undoubted certainty, shall triumph over malice and falsehood."

On returning to the town on our way home, and passing by the town-prison, Peter Petróveetch proposed to us to enter and scatter the seeds of consolation in that abode of misery, as he called it. I had a few ducats in my purse, and cheerfully agreed to visit the *ostrog*, in order to alleviate in some degree the lot of the unfortunates. This *ostrog* was nothing more than a common *eezba*,* surrounded with a fence. On account of the smallness of accommodation, it was impossible to separate the people in custody according to the nature of their offences; and thence it happened, that the little thoughtless boy who had run away from his master in a frolic, was placed beside the veteran thief or robber, and became insensibly a proficient in the arts of iniquity. For want of room, there was also no possibility of maintaining cleanliness. The soldiers on guard were posted in the passages, and on both sides of the two *eezbas*: the prisoners were pent up like herrings in a barrel. I grew sick from the offensiveness of the air, and the impression made upon me by the sight of a pair of wild eyes. I beseeched my companions to take me into the fresh air. On a sudden we heard, in a little cell, piercing groans and strange cries. Curiosity led us thither, and a shocking spectacle presented itself before my sight. In a

* Peasant's log-house.

dark corner, on straw, there lay a half naked man, thin as a skeleton, and with his arms and legs in fetters. The light had scarcely penetrated his den, when he rose and seated himself, casting upon us a hideous gaze. Our eyes met, and I trembled all over as at the look of a basilisk. The black hair and eyes of the wretch were dishevelled; his face was overcast with a deadly paleness, and his eyes which were red with sleeplessness and suffering, looked like glowing coals.

After a short silence, the unfortunate wretch raised his fettered arms, first to his forehead, and then to his heart, and said in a low tone :—" Fire ! fire !" then opening his mouth wide, whispered, " Water !" A sergeant gave him a wooden pitcher, and he, after drinking it, tossed it from him, and called out loudly, " Away, away ! blood, blood !" On a sudden his hair stood on end ; the features of his face moved convulsively, his eyes became fixed in their sockets, and the foam issued from his mouth : he gnashed with his teeth, rose up rapidly and cried out, " I am Nojoff !" " Nojoff !" exclaimed I simultaneously with Meloveeden. It really was the malefactor, whom I did not at first recognize from his altered situation ; but when he pronounced his name, I immediately recollected his features.

In the meantime the poor wretch again fell on his litter, and called out with a tremendous voice. " Do not burn me, do not burn me : but kill me at one blow !" My legs could hardly support me ; I was so agitated, the blood ran to my heart, and my head be-

came dizzy; but I remained in the place, expecting that Nojoff would recover from the fit, and would tell me the name of the Countess who was my enemy. The culprit was again silent and shut his eyes. Meloveeden called him by name. Nojoff opened his eyes as if he heard him. "Nojoff!" said Meloveeden, "Vejeeghen forgives you for all the ill that you have done him." Nojoff again sat up upon the straw, and looking around him, said: "Where is Vejeeghen? He died in the *steppe*. I myself threw him into a pit. The countess did not wish him to be murdered." — — At these words Nojoff again fell into a fit, shut his eyes, and snored terribly. I could no longer endure this shocking spectacle, and left the *ostrog*.

"You know that malefactor?" inquired Peter Petróveetch. "Unfortunately," replied I. "To-morrow I shall relate to you the particulars of my acquaintance with him: but at present I am so distracted that I cannot arrange my thoughts." Peter Petróveetch accompanied us home: I spent the whole evening, without leaving the room, and passed a sleepless night, impatient to learn from Nojoff the secret of my persecution. Next morning I sent to the *ostrog* to enquire how the unfortunate man was, but was told that he had given up the ghost in extreme agony soon after our departure.

Peter Petróveetch, to whom I related part of my adventures, and who had heard of Vorovaateen, advised me to be very careful to whom I mentioned my secret, for fear of falling into any greater calamity. "In a court of law you will make nothing of

Vorovaateen : as you have no witnesses, Vorovaateen may say that the Kirgheez took you prisoner by force. Besides, if you mix up your affair with any family of rank, you will get into trouble. It will be best of all to get what information you can by circuitous means ; and if you only learn the name of your female persecutor, the secret will come out of itself. You have seen, by Nojoff's example, that hardness and fearlessness in crime end in the horrors of disease : at the same time that a virtuous sufferer has all the enjoyment arising from the hope of a better life to console him in his last moments, a wicked man is assailed with the remorse of conscience, the most frightful of the tortures of hell. Vorovaateen at the first attack of violent illness, or the first danger, will shew as much pusillanimity as all malefactors, and will reveal the truth to you. Crime unrepented of ends in despair ; but immoveable firmness is peculiar to virtue alone !”

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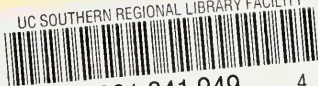
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